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Iamblichus, of Chalcis.

THEURGIA

OR

THE EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES

By IAMBLICHOS

Reply of Abammon, the Teacher

TO

The Letter of Porphyry to Anebo

TOGETHER WITH

Solutions of the Questions Therein Contained

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK

BY

ALEXANDER WILDER, M. D. F. A. S.

The aim is to express "the original, the whole original, and nothing but the original, and withal good readable English"

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I

LETTER OF PORPHYRY TO ANEBO

THE EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES

BY IAMBLICHOS

TRANSLATED ANEW AND ANNOTATED

BY ALEXANDER WILDER, M.D., F.A.S.*

CHAPTER I

LETTER OF PORPHYRY TO ANEBO

Porphyry to the Prophet Anebo.† Greeting.

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*The aim is to express "the original, the whole original and nothing but the original, and withal good, readable English." A. W.

†Porphyry, it is well known, was a distinguished scholar, and the foremost writer in the later Platonic School. He was a native of Tyre, and his name Molech, or King, was rendered by Longinus into *πορφυριος Porphurios,* denoting the royal purple, as a proper equivalent. He was a disciple of Plotinos, who had broadened the field of philosophic study till it included the "Wisdom of the East." In personal habits he followed the Pythagorean discipline. He was a severe critic of the Gnostic beliefs then current, and he evidently included with them also the new Christian faith. His mysticism was spiritual and contemplative, and he regarded the ceremonial rites of the Egyptian theurgy with distrust. He favored Mithraism, which prevailed in Asia, while Iamblichos belonged rather to the cult of Serapis, which was the State religion of Egypt.

Of Anebo we know little. He is addressed as an Egyptian priest, and his name is that of Anabu or Anubis, the Egyptian psyxhopompos and patron of sacred literature. He was a "prophet" *hen niter* or servant of divinity, and expounder of the oracles: and Porphyry himself an *"epoptes"* or initiated person, asks him accordingly to explain the Egyptian theosophic doctrines respecting the divine beings, rites and religious faith.

I will begin this friendly correspondence with thee with a view to learning what is believed in respect to the gods and good dæmons and likewise the various philosophic speculations in regard to them. Very many things have been set forth concerning these subjects by the (Grecian) philosophers, but they for the most part have derived the substance of their belief from conjecture.

I

THE GODS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES

In the first place, therefore, it is to be taken for granted that there are gods. I ask then: what are the peculiarities of the superior races, by which they are differentiated from each other? Are we to suppose the cause of the distinction to be their energies or their passive motions, or things consequent: or is it a classification established by difference of bodies—the gods being distinguished by ætherial bodies, the dæmons by aërial bodies, and souls by bodies pertaining to the earth?

As the gods dwell in heaven only, I ask therefore, why are invocations at the Theurgic Rites directed to them as being of the Earth and Underworld? How is it that although possessing power unlimited, undivided, and unrestricted, some of them are mentioned as being of the water and of the atmosphere, and that others are allotted by definite limitations to different places and to distinct parts of bodies? If they are actually separated by circumscribed limitations of parts, and according to diversities of places and subject-bodies, how will there be any union of them one to another?

How can the Theosophers* consider them as impressionable? For it is said that on this account phallic images are

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*The Theosophers were regarded as learned in the arcane knowledge, and especially in Theurgy. Iamblichos appears to have adopted these Rites and usages from the Egyptian worship, including with them a philosophic groundwork from the Platonic doctrines.

set up and that immodest language is used at the Rites?* Certainly if they are impassive and unimpressionable the invocations of the gods, announcing favorable inclinations, propitiations of their anger and expiatory sacrifices, and still further what are called "necessities of the gods," will be utterly useless. For that which is impassive is not to be charmed or forced† or constrained by necessity.

Why, then, are many things performed to them in the Sacred Rites, as to impressionable beings? The invocations are made as to gods that are impressionable beings: so that it is implied that not the dæmons only are impressionable, but the gods likewise, as was declared in Homer:

"Even the gods themselves are yielding."

Suppose, then, we say, as certain individuals have affirmed, that the gods are pure mental essences and that the dæmons are psychic beings participating of mind.‡ The fact remains, nevertheless, that the pure mental essences are not to be charmed or mingled with things of sense, and that the suppli-

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*The use of images and emblems of a sacred character to typify divine power and energy is universal. Somewhat of the divine was supposed to inhere in them. The "images" and *asheras* or "groves" mentioned in the Bible were of this character. So was the "idol in a grove," made by Queen Maachah, as well as the simulacrums which, as Herodotus states, the Egyptian women carried at the festivals.

†Compare *Gospel according to Matthew,* XI, 12. "From the days of John the Baptist till now, the kingdom of heaven is forced, and they who are violent seize it."

‡Xenokrates, who was a disciple of Plato, himself taught these doctrines. He considered the heavens as divine and that the substance of the divine nature was mind pure and absolute. He also described the stars as "visible divinities." The dæmons were depicted as of a psychic nature, subordinate to that of the gods, and therefore subject to emotion and perturbation like human beings, while at the same time sharing in a degree in the power and intelligence of the gods.

cations which are offered are entirely foreign to this purity of mental substance.* But on the other hand the things that are offered are offered as to sensitive and psychic natures.

Are gods, then, separated from dæmons by the distinction of bodied and unbodied? If, however, only the gods are incorporeal, how shall the Sun, the Moon, and the visible luminaries in the sky be accounted as gods?

How is it that some of them are givers of good and others bring evil?

What is the bond of union that connects the divinities in the sky that have bodies with the gods that are unbodied?

The gods that are visible (in the sky) being included in the same category with the invisible, what distinguishes the dæmons from the visible, and likewise the invisible, gods?

II

THE SUPERIOR RACES AND THEIR MANIFESTATIONS

In what does a dæmon differ from a hero or half-god or from a soul?† Is it in essence, in power, or in energy?‡

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*Greek, *νοος* the mind or "rational soul," the essence or principle of intelligence which transcends the understanding or reasoning faculty, and is capable of knowing truth intuitively and instinctively from being itself of divine origin.

†Here Porphyry has given an ancient classification of spiritual beings into four orders, the gods, dæmons or guardians, the *heroes* or half-gods, and souls. There were other distinctions in the Eastern countries, and we find Abammon, the Teacher, adding to these the archangels, angels and archons of both the higher and lower nature. These were named in several of the Gnostic categories that were extant at that period. "We have no conflict with blood and flesh," says the Christian apostle, "but with archonates, authorities, the world-rulers of this dark region, and spiritual forces of evil in the upper heavens."

‡By "essence" is signified the underlying principle of being; by "power" the intermediate agency; and by "energy" the operative faculty which enables actual results.

What is the *token* (at the Sacred Rites) of the presence of a god or an angel, or an archangel, or a dæmon, or of some archon, or a soul? For it is a common thing with the gods and dæmons alike, and with all the superior races, to speak boastfully and to project an unreal image into view.* Hence the race of the gods is thus made to seem to be in no respect superior to that of the dæmons.

It is also acknowledged that ignorance and delusion in respect to the gods is irreligiousness and impurity, and that the superior knowledge in respect to them is holy and helpful: the former being the darkness of ignorance in regard to the things revered and beautiful, and the latter the light of knowledge. The former condition will cause human beings to be beset with every form of evil through ignorance and recklessness,† but the latter is the source of everything beneficial.

III

ORACLES AND DIVINATION

What is it that takes place in divination? For example, when we are asleep, we often come, through dreams, to a perception of things that are about to occur. We are not in an ecstasy full of commotion, for the body lies at rest, yet we do not ourselves apprehend these things as clearly as when we are awake.

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*This inquiry in regard to the apparitions which the candidates beheld at the initiation is made plainer by Proklos: "In the most sacred stages of the Perfective Rites," says he, "before the gods come into view, there appear intrusive figures of demons of the Underworld, to draw away the attention of the candidate from the spotless Good to the gross and material." It may be pertinent to add that in the several Grottoes or Halls of Initiation there was machinery ingeniously constructed for the purpose of representing divine and other personages. See *The Epicurean,* by Thomas Moore, and *The Great Dionysiak Myth,* by Robert Brown, Jr., VI, 2, 3.

†"I do not see any sin in the world," says George Sand, "but I see a great deal of ignorance."

In like manner many also come to a perception of the future through enthusiastic rapture and a divine impulse, when at the same time so thoroughly awake as to have the senses in full activity. Nevertheless, they by no means follow the matter closely, or at least they do not attend to it as closely as when in their ordinary condition. So, also, certain others of these ecstatics become entheast or inspired when they hear cymbals, drums, or some choral chant; as for example, those who are engaged in the Korybantic Rites, those who are possessed at the Sabazian festivals, and those who are celebrating the Rites of the Divine Mother. Others, also, are inspired when drinking water, like the priest of the Klarian Apollo at Kolophon; others when sitting over cavities in the earth, like the women who deliver oracles at Delphi; others when affected by vapor from the water, like the prophetesses at Branchidæ; and others when standing in indented marks like those who have been filled from an imperceptible inflowing of the divine plerome. Others who understand themselves in other respects become inspired through the Fancy: some taking darkness as accessory, others employing certain potions, and others depending on singing and magic figures. Some are affected by means of water, others by gazing on a wall, others by the hypethral air, and others by the sun or in some other of the heavenly luminaries. Some have likewise established the technique of searching the future by means of entrails, birds and stars.

What, I ask, is the nature of divination, and what is its peculiar character? The diviners all say that they arrive at the foreknowledge of the future through gods or dæmons, and that it is not possible for others to have any inkling of it only those who have command over the things to be. I dispute, therefore, whether the divine power is brought down to such subserviency to human beings as, for instance, not to hold aloof from any who are diviners with barley-meal.

In regard, however, to the origins of the oracular art, it is to be doubted whether a god, or angel, or dæmon, or some other such being, is present at the Manifestations,* or at the divina-

*Greek, *ἐπιφανεία* epiphany—an apparition or manifestation, such as was exhibited in mystic and theurgic rites.

tions, or at any other of the Sacred Performances, as having been drawn thither through you by the necessities created by the invocations.

Some are of opinion that the soul itself both utters and imagines these things, and that there are similar conditions of it which have been produced from little sparks; others, that there is a certain mingled form of substance produced from our own soul and from the divine in breathing; others, that the soul, through such activities, generates from itself a faculty of Imagination in regard to the future, or else that the emanations from the realm of matter bring dæmons into existence through their inherent forces, especially when the emanations are derived from animals.

These conjectures are put forth for the following statements:

1. That during sleep, when we are not engaged with anything, we sometimes chance to obtain perception of the future.

2. That likewise, an evidence that a condition of the Soul is a principal source of the art of divining is shown by the facts that the senses are held in check, fumes and invocations being employed for the purpose; and that by no means everybody, but only the more artless and young persons, are suitable for the purpose.

3. That likewise, ecstasy or alienation of mind is a chief origin of the divining art; also the mania which occurs in diseases, mental aberration, abstinence from wine, suffusions of the body. fancies set in motion by morbid conditions or equivocal states of mind, such as may occur during abstinence and ecstasy, or apparitions got up by technical magic.*

4. That both the realm of Nature, Art, and the feeling in things of common throughout the universe, as of the parts in one animal, contain foreshadowings of certain things with reference to others. Moreover, there are bodies so constituted as to be a forewarning from some to others. Examples of this kind are manifest by the things done, namely: that they who make the invocations (at the Rites) carry stones and herbs, tie

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*Goeteia, or "black magic."

sacred knots and unloose them, open places that are locked, and change the purposes of individuals by whom they are entertained, so that from being paltry they are made worthy. They also who are able to reproduce the mystic figures are not to be held in low esteem. For they watch the course of the heavenly bodies, and tell from the position and relation of one with another whether the oracular announcements of the ruling planet will be false or true, or whether the rites which have been performed will be to no purpose, or will be expressive or arcane, although no god or dæmon is drawn down to them.

There are some, however, who suppose there is likewise, the subject-race of a tricky nature, artful, and assuming all shapes, turning many ways, that personates gods and demons and souls of the dead like actors on the stage; and that through these everything that seems to be good or bad is possible. They are led to form this judgment because these subject-spirits are not able to contribute anything really beneficial as relates to the soul, nor even to perceive such things; but on the other hand, they ill treat, deride, and often impede those who are returning to virtue.

They are likewise full of conceit, and take delight in vapors and sacrifices.

5. Because the begging priest with open mouth attempts in many ways to raise our expectations.*

IV

THE INVOCATIONS OF THE THEURGIC RITES

It perplexes me greatly to form a conception how they who are invoked as superior beings are likewise commanded like

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*The *agurtes* or begging priest generally belonged to the worship of Rhea or Kybêlê, the Mother. He is frequently depicted in a most unfavorable light. Apuleius speaks of a company of these emasculate priests in the eighth book of the *Metamorphoses*. They are also described in the *Republic* of Plato: "*Agurtæ* and *Mantics* frequent the houses of the rich and persuade them that they possess a power granted by the gods to expiate, by sacrifices and chants any unjust act that has been committed and that they induce the gods by blandishments and magic rites to help them. They collected money in this way, and they also followed the selling of nostrums and telling of fortunes."

inferiors; also that they require the worshipper to be just, although when entreated, they themselves consent to perform unjust acts. They will not hearken to the person who is invoking them if he is not pure from sexual contamination, yet they themselves do not hesitate to lead chance individuals into unlawful sexual relations.

V

SACRIFICES AND PRAYERS

(I am likewise in doubt in regard to the sacrifices, what utility or power they possess in the world and with the gods, and for what reason they are performed, appropriate for the beings thus honored and advantageously for the persons who present the gifts.*)

The gods also require that the interpreters of the oracles observe strict abstinence from animal substances, in order that they may not be made impure by the fumes from the bodies; yet they themselves are allured most of all by the fumes of the sacrifices of animals.

VI

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

It is also required that the Beholder† must be pure from the

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*This paragraph is taken from Part V, Chapter I, and is not found in the text of the Letter as we have it. It is quoted there as belonging in this place. In the original Greek text the preceding paragraph appears in unbroken connection with the one which follows, and in dividing them we find it necessary to add a clause, to introduce the subject.

†Greek, *ἐποπτής* an epopt, seer, or beholder; a person admitted to the higher degree of initiation. "The Perfective Rite leads the way as the *muesis* or mystic initiation," says Proklos, "and after that is the *epopteia* or beholding." Theôn describes it as three degrees—"the Purification, Initiation and Beholding of the Divine Vision." Mr. Robert Brown, Jr., explains the last of these very fully. "This is the Autopsia or Personal Inspection, the Crown of Mysteries, the Epopteia or Divine Beholding, and he becomes an Epoptes or Contemplator." (*Great Dionysiak Myth,* VI, 2, 3.)

As the Autoptic Visions are the principal topic in this work, the term "Beholder." is adopted uniformly for several words of the same import.

contact of anything dead, and yet the rites employed to bring the gods hither, many of them, are made effective through dead animals.

What, then, is more preposterous than these things—that a human being, inferior in dignity, should make use of threats, not to a dæmon or soul of some dead person, but to the Sun-King himself, or to the Moon, or some one of the divine ones in the sky, himself uttering falsehood in order that they may be caused to speak the truth? For the declaration that he will assail the sky, that he will reveal to view the Arcana of Isis, that he will expose to public gaze the ineffable symbol in the innermost sanctuary, that he will stop the Baris; that, like Typhon, he will scatter the limbs of Osiris, or do something of a similar character, what is it but an extravagant absurdity, threatening what he neither knows how nor is able to perform? What dejection of spirit does it not produce in those who, like children, destitute of intelligence, are dismayed by groundless fear and terrified by these false alarms?

And yet Chairemon, the Scribe of the Temple, records these things as current discourse among the Egyptian priests.* It is also said that these threats, and others of like tenor, are very violent.

VII

SACRED NAMES AND SYMBOLIC EXPRESSIONS

The Prayers also: What do they mean when they speak of the one coming forth to light from the slime, sitting on the Lotus-blossom, sailing in a boat, changing forms according to

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*As the term "Egyptian" is applied only in this work to individuals of sacerdotal rank, the designation of "priest" is added. The Hierogrammateus, or Scribe of the Temple, was a priest of the lower class, and his duty was to keep the records, teach students the religious observances, and take care that they were duly obedient. The prophets were superior to the Scribes. The Temples of Egypt, like those of Babylonia, were seminaries for instruction, and all departments of Science and philosophy were included in their teachings as being Sacred Learning.

the season, and assuming a shape according to the Signs of the Zodiac? For so this is said to be seen at the Autopsias; and they unwittingly attribute to the divinity a peculiar incident of their own imagination. If, however, these expressions are uttered figuratively, and are symbolic representations of his forces, let them tell the interpretation of the symbols. For it is plain that if they denote the condition of the Sun, as in eclipses, they would be seen by every one who looked toward it intently.

Why, also, are terms preferred that are unintelligible, and of those that are unintelligible why are foreign ones preferred instead of those of our own language? For if the one who hears gives attention to the signification it is enough that the concept remains the same, whatever the term may be. For the divinity that is invoked is possibly not Egyptian in race; and if he is Egyptian, he is far from making use of Egyptian speech, or indeed of any human language at all. Either these are all artful contrivances of jugglers, and disguises having their origin in the passive conditions induced about us through being attributed to the divine agency, or we have left unnoticed conceptions of the divine nature that are contrary to what it is.

VIII

THE FIRST CAUSE

I desire you further to declare plainly to me what the Egyptian Theosophers believe the First Cause to be; whether Mind, or above mind; and whether one alone, or subsisting with another or with several others; whether unbodied or embodied, whether the very same as the Creator of the Universe (Demiurgos) or prior to the Creator; also whether they likewise have knowledge respecting Primal Matter;* or of what nature the first bodies were; and whether the Primal Matter was unoriginated, or was generated. For Chairemon and the others

*Greek, ὑλή hulé; a term first adopted by Aristotle to signify the objective, negative or passive element upon which the Creative energy operates. Plato named it the "receptacle," as containing the creative energy and making it effective.

hold that there is not anything else prior to the worlds which we behold. At the beginning of their discourses they adopt the divinities of the Egyptians, but no other gods, except those called Planets, those that make up the Zodiac and such as rise with these, and likewise those divided into decans, those which indicate nativities, and those which are called the Mighty Leaders. The names of these are preserved in the Almanacs, together with their routine of changes, their risings and settings, and their signifying of future events. For these men perceived that the things which were said respecting the Sun-God as the Demiurgos, or Creator of the Universe, and concerning Osiris and Isis, and all the Sacred Legends, may be interpreted as relating to the stars, their phases, occultations, and revolutions in their orbits, or else to the increase and decrease of the Moon, the course of the Sun, the vault of the sky as seen by night or by day, or the river Nile, and, in short, they explain everything as relating to natural objects, and nothing as having reference to incorporeal and living essences.*

More of them likewise attribute to motion of the stars whatever may relate to us. They bind everything, I know not how, in the indissoluble bonds of necessity, which they term Fate, or allotment; and they also connect everything with those gods whom *they* worship in temples and with carved images and other objects, as being the only unbinders of Fate.

IX

NATIVITIES AND GUARDIAN DEMONS

The next thing to be learned relates to the peculiar demon

*Plutarch comments somewhat severely upon this mode of interpretation. In his treatise *On Isis and Osiris* he remarks that some individuals do not scruple to say that Osiris is the Sun, Isis no other than the Moon, and that Typhon is fire, or drouth, or the Ocean. But he adds in rebuttal: "No one can rationally imagine that these objects can be gods in themselves; for nothing can be a god that is either without soul, or under the power of natural objects." He also remarks that "there is an excellent saying among philosophers, that they who have not learned the true sense of words will also mistake in the things that are meant."

or guardian spirit—how the Lord of the House* assigns it, according to what purpose or what quality of emanation or life or power comes from it to us, whether it really exists or does not exist, and whether it is impossible or possible actually to find the Lord of the House. Certainly, if it is possible, then the person has learned the scheme of his nativity; knowing his own guardian demon, is liberated from fate, is truly favored by divinity. Nevertheless, the rules for casting nativities are countless, and beyond comprehension. Moreover, it is impossible for expertness in astral observations to amount to an actual knowing, for there is great disagreement in relation to it, and Chairemon, as well as many others, have spoken against it. Hence the assumption of a Lord of the House (or Lords of the House, if there are more than one) pertaining to a nativity is almost confessed by astrologers themselves to be beyond absolute proving; and yet it is from this assumption, they say, that the ascertaining of the person's own personal demon is possible.

But further, I wish to be informed whether our personal demon presides over some specific one of the regions within us. For it seems to be believed by some persons that there are demons allotted to specific departments of the body—one over the health, one over the figure, and another over the bodily habits, forming a bond of union among them; and that one is placed as superior over all of them in common. And further, they suppose that there is one demon guardian of the body, another of the soul, and another of the superior mind;† also that some demons are good and others bad.

I am in doubt, however, whether our particular demon may not be a special part of the soul; and hence he who has a mind imbued with good sense would be the truly favored one.

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*Greek, *οἰκοδεσποτής*: Hebrew, *Baal Zebul.* In astrology a "house" is a twelfth part of the sky as marked out for the purpose of horoscopes. Every sign of the Zodiac thus had a "house," which a planet or planetary genius was considered as occupying, and thence ruling the days and events of the month to which it belonged.

†Compare *First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians,* V, 23: "Spirit and soul and body."

I observe, moreover, that there is a twofold worship of the personal demon; also, that some perform it as to two and others as to three, but nevertheless he is invoked by all with a common form of invocation.

X

ENDÆMONIA, OR TRUE SUCCESS

I question, however, whether there may not be some other secret path to true success which is afar from (the Rites of) the gods. I doubt whether it is really necessary to pay any regard to the opinions of individuals in regard to the divine endowment of divination and Theurgy, and whether the Soul does not now and then form grand conceptions. On the contrary, also, there are other methods for obtaining premonitions of what will take place. Perhaps, also, they who exercise the divine art of divining may indeed foresee, and yet they are not really successful: for they may foresee future events and not know how to make use of the foresight properly for themselves. I desire from you, therefore, to show me the path to success and in what the essence of it consists. For among us (philosophers) there is much wrangling, as though good might be derived from human reasonings by comparison of views.

If, however, this part of the inquiry, the intimate association with the superior race is passed over by those who devised it, wisdom will be taught by them to trivial purpose, such as calling the Divine Mind to take part about the finding of a fugitive slave, or a purchase of land, or, if it should so happen, a marriage or a matter of trade. Suppose, however, that this subject of intimate communion with the Superior race is not passed over, and those who are thus in communication tell things that are remarkably true about different matters, but nothing important or trustworthy in relation to the true success—employing themselves diligently with matters that are difficult, but of no use to human beings—then there were neither gods nor good dæmons present, but on the contrary, a demon of that kind called "Vagabond," or it was all an invention of men or an air-castle of a mortal nature.

II

REPLY OF ABAMMON TO LETTER OF PORPHYRY TO ANEBO

THE EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES

PART I
THE GODS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES

CHAPTER II
REPLY OF ABAMMON THE TEACHER TO THE LETTER OF PORPHYRY TO ANEBO

INTRODUCTION

Hermes*, the patron of literature, was rightly considered of old to be a god common to all the priests† and the one presiding over the genuine learning relating to the gods, one and the same among all. Hence our predecessors were wont to ascribe to him their discoveries in wisdom and to name all their respective works *Books of Hermes.*

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*Hermes is here the same as the Egyptian divinity, Thoth or Tahuti, the god of learning and medicine. He was regarded as the Scribe or recorder who registered the actions of the dead and living, so that they "were judged out of those things which were written in the books." He was also the revealer of the divine will to men. His name *Tahuti* signifies "thrice great" or "very great," or *Trismegistos,* in Greek.

†The priests in Egypt consisted of many orders, including those who performed the Rites, the learned profession which included prophets, philosophers, poets, authors, physicians, artists, master mechanics, and also embalmers of the dead.

If, therefore, we participate in this god*, of the measure which has fallen to us and become possible to us, thou dost well to propose these questions in regard to the Divine Sciences to the priests as to friends for an accurate solution. Having good reason therefore for considering the letter sent by thee to Anebo, my pupil, as having been written to myself, I will answer thee truly in regard to the matters about which thou hast enquired. For it would not be becoming that Pythagoras, Plato, Demokritos, Eudoxos, and many others of the old Greeks, should have obtained competent instruction from the temple-scribes of their own time†, but that thou who art contemporary with us, and having the same disposition as they, should be turned away by those now living and recognized as public teachers.

Accordingly, I myself engage thus in the present discussion. Thou, if thou dost so choose, art at liberty to consider the person who is now writing to thee as the same individual to whom thou hast sent thy letter. If, however, it shall seem to thee more proper, then regard the individual who is discoursing with thee in writing to be one or some other prophet

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*This form of expression extends through this entire book. Though hardly familiar to us, it was formerly common in philosophic writings. The gods being spiritual essences, it was very properly considered that their worshipers would participate in their substance as we partake of the air that we inhale. In this way their powers and virtues were supposed to be imparted to the recipients. This treatise accordingly mentions the gifts received by the persons initiated at the telestic or Theurgic Rites, as a participating of the gods. The fact that they represent or personify qualities rather than individualities makes this mode of speaking eminently proper.

†In archaic periods, the worship and literature of every people was exclusive. Every repast being accompanied by religious ceremonies, the Egyptians would not eat with foreigners. Aahmes II broke through this restriction and made treaties of friendship and commerce with several Grecian and Ionian States. By his command, and at the instance of Polykrates of Samos, a tyrant-king, Pythagoras was admitted to instruction at the temples, and formally initiated into the sacerdotal caste. After the Persian conquest others resorted to Egypt for similar purposes; among them Plato, Demokritos, Archimedes, Chrysippos, Euripides.

of the Egyptians, for this is not a matter worth differing about. Or, as I think still a better way, let it pass unnoticed whether the person speaking is of inferior or superior rank, and direct the attention solely to the things that are uttered, thus arousing the understanding to eagerness simply as to whether that which is said be true or false.

In the first place, let us take the subjects separately in order to ascertain the scope and quality of the problems which are now proposed for discussion. Next let us examine in detail the theories respecting divine matters from which thy doubts were conceived, and make a statement of them, as to the sources of knowledge by which they are to be investigated.

Some which are badly jumbled together require to be taken apart; while others have relation to the Divine Cause through which everything exists, and so are readily apprehended. Others which we might put forward according to a certain plan of exhibiting contradictory views, draw out the judgment in both directions; and there are likewise some which demand from us to explain the whole of the Initiatory Rites.

Such being the facts, our answers are to be taken from many places and from different sources of knowledge. Some of these introduce fundamental principles from the traditions which the sages of the Chaldeans delivered; others derive support from the doctrines which the Prophets of the Egyptian temples teach; and some of them follow closely the speculations of the Philosophers and elicit the conclusions which belong to them. And now there are some of these which involve an unbecoming dispute from diverse notions that are not worthy of a word; and others that have their origin from prejudices common to human beings. All these, therefore, are to be disposed of in various ways by themselves, and are in many ways connected with one another.

Hence, on account of all these things, there is some discussion necessary for the directing of them properly.

PLAN OF THE DISCUSSION

We will, therefore, set forth to thee the hereditary opinions

of the Assyrian Sages* in regard to the True Knowledge, and will show thee in plain terms our own. Some things in the Gnôsis will be brought into the discussion from the innumerable archain writings, and the rest will be from the works upon the entire range of Divine Matters, which the old compilers have collected into a book of limited dimensions.

If, however, thou wouldst propose some philosophic question, we will determine it for thee according to the ancient Tablets of Hermes†, which Plato and Pythagoras, having studied thoroughly beforehand, combined together in Philosophy.

But questions that are foreign to the subject, or that are disputatious and exhibit a contentious disposition of mind, we shall tone down gently and aptly, or else show their impropriety. So far also as they go in the line of common ways of thinking we shall try to discuss them in a familiar manner. Those, likewise, which require the experiences of the Divine Dramas‡ for an intelligent understanding we will, as far as it is possible, explain by words alone§; but those which are

*It is evident that there was a Gnôsis, or Sacred Doctrine common to the religions of the principal countries, and that its focus was at Babylon. Compare Jeremiah LI. 7 and Revelation XVII. Iamblichos lived chiefly at Khalkis in Syria, and was familiar with the magi and learned men of Persia and Assyria. Hence as Abammon he refers the Gnôsis to that region.

†The Stelæ, Pillars or Tablets of Thôth, appear to be little else than a figurative expression for the sacred learning in possession of the Sacerdotal Caste in Egypt. When we call to mind that the Pyramids in that country, before their spoilation, were cased all over with tablets of stone on which hieroglyphic writing was engraved, we shall the better apprehend the significance of the allusion of Abammon.

‡Greek, ἔργα θεια divine works or performances; the exhibitions at the Mystic Rites. As these were dramatic representations to prefigure experiences of a spiritlal character, we substitute the term "*drama*" as more likely to afford a clearer conception of the meaning. Element designated the Eleusinic "drama."

§Mr. Gale, editor of the Greek text of this work as published at Oxford, was of the opinion that the reading of the original was corrupt, and suggested an emendation which may be rendered as follows: "It is impossible to explain by mere words." This would be in harmony with the statement in the Second Pauline Epistle to the Corinthian believers: "He was carried suddenly to paradise and heard things ineffable which it is not permitted to a human being to utter familiarly."

likewise full of intellectual speculation will be shown to be effective for purifying (from the earthly contamination).

It is possible, however, to tell the signs of this which are worthy to be noted, and from these both thou and those who are like thee in mind can be brought near to the very essence of things that have real being*.

So far, however, as they may be actually known through words, none of these matters will be left without a perfect demonstration, and in reference to everything we shall give thee carefully the proper explanation. Those which relate to divine matters we will answer as theologists; and those which pertain to Theurgy we will explain theurgically. Those of a philosophic character we will search out with thee as philosophers, and such as extend to the Primary Causes we will bring forth into light following the argument together according to first principles. Such, however, as pertain to morals or final results we will determine properly according to ethical form; and other questions, in like manner, we will treat according to their proper place in the arrangement.

We will now proceed to thy questions.

TWO FORMS OF KNOWING

Thou beginnest accordingly by saying: "In the first place, it is to be taken for granted that there are gods." Speaking in this way is not right. For the inborn knowledge in respect to the gods is coëxistent with our very being, and is superior to all judging and deciding beforehand. Indeed, it is preëxistent both to argument and demonstration, and is united interiorly from the beginning to its own divine cause and is coëxistent with the inherent longing and impulse of the soul to the *Good*†.

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*Plato and his disciples employ the principle ὤν or being to denote the Absolute Divinity; also the phrase ὄοντως ὤν real being or that which really is or has being, as contrasted with the "*genesis*" or objective existence.

†It was the practice of the philosophers to make use of abstract terms to represent the Supreme and Absolute. Of this character are τὸἀγαθόν the Good; τὸἀλγαες the True, ὅἐἰς the One.

If, however, we must speak truly, the conjoining to the divine nature is not knowing, for this is kept separate after a manner by an otherness.* ? ? where does he come in ?!

Plato taught, says Professor Cocker, that man longs for the good, and bears witness by his restlessness and disquietude; that he instinctively desires it, and that he can find no rest and satisfaction in anything apart from the knowledge and participation of the Supreme Absolute Good.

Prior to this knowing, however, which is as of one individual having knowledge of another, the intimate union as in a single concept is self-originated and indistinguishable. Hence we ought to concede the point as though possibly it might not be granted, not to assume it as a matter of uncertainty, for it always existed simply in energy. Nor is it proper to put it to proof in this way as though we had authority to judge and reject; for we are ourselves encompassed in it, or rather we are filled by it, and the very selfhood which we are we possess in this knowing of the gods†.

I have, moreover, the same thing to say to thee in regard to the Superior races which come next in order after the gods. I mean the demons, heroes, and uncontaminate souls‡.

For it is always necessary to bear in mind respecting these subordinate races that they have one defined form of essence; also that we put aside from our conception of them the indefiniteness and instability which are incident to the human con-

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*Power and energy are thus distinguished from their result. Damaskios remarks that "where there is not otherness, there will be no knowing. A union on conjunction, as of one to another, is superior to knowledge."

†The *Chaldæan Oracles* quoted by Damaskios declare that "the prolific fountain of souls is encompassed by the two Minds." He adds that "the fiery signals which draw down the ripe ones are in God," which Simplikios explains: "The Unbodied ones are the Supreme Mind and God being Source and Cause."

‡Damaskios described the "demons" as tutelary spirits of a nature essentially divine. They were said to have charge of the oracles and worldly affairs generally. The "heroes" or demigods were a lower race in the order of emanation. The term denotes the son of a divinity, with a human parent. Uncontaminated souls are such as are not impure from the attraction of the *genesis* or domain of phenomenal existence.

stitution and renounce the tendency to incline to the other side which arises from attempts to counterbalance the opposition of the arguments. For such a thing is foreign to the principles of reason and life, but is derived from secondary sources, such even as belong to the power and contrariness of the realm of generated existence. It is necessary, however, to treat of them as being of a uniform nature.

Let it be admitted, then, that with the companions of the gods* in the eternal region there is the innate perception of them.

Therefore, even as they have their being always after the same manner, so also the human soul is conjoined to them by Knowledge according to the same principles; never by any conjecture, opinion or reasoning which have their beginning in Time pursuing the essence which is beyond all these, but by pure and faultless intuitions which it received out of eternity from the gods being conjoined with them in these principles.

Nevertheless, thou seemest to consider the knowing of divine beings to be the same as the knowing of other matters, and likewise that a point may be taken for granted from opposing arguments, as is usual in debates. But there is no such similarity. For the perceiving of them is absolutely distinct from everything of antithetic character. It is not made valid by being now conceded or by coming into existence, but on the other hand it is a single concept, and coëxisted with the soul from eternity.

I say such things to thee, therefore, in regard to the first principle in us, at which it is necessary for those to begin who would both speak and hear anything whatever concerning the superior races or about ourselves.

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*The Platonic philosophers before Iamblichos taught that the many gods are the "outshinings" or emanations of the one Super-essential Deity and not substances complete of themselves. The Ancient Sadducees are said to have held a similar opinion, not denying the actual existence of angels and spirits, but that they existed permanently by inherent energy. The same sentiment appears in the ninety-fifth (ninety-sixth) Psalm. The *Chaldæan Oracle,* however, declared that "Not from the eternal source did anything run forth incomplete."

PECULIARITIES OF THE SUPERIOR RACES

Then follows thy question: "What are the peculiarities of the Superior races by which they are differentiated from each other?" If by "peculiarities" thou meanest differences as of species under the same genus, which are distinguished by opposite characteristics, as rational and irrational under the head of *animal,* we by no means admit the existence of such differences in beings that neither have one common essence* nor characteristics diverse from one another, nor have received an organization from a common source which is undefined and yet defines the peculiarity.

If, however, thou supposest the peculiarity to be a certain simple condition limited in itself, as in primary and secondary races, which differ in their entire essence and in the whole genus, thy notion of the peculiarities is reasonable. For these peculiarities of beings that always exist will all be in some manner set apart, separate and simple.

The questioning, however, is going forward to little purpose, for it behooves us, first of all, to ascertain what the peculiarities are in regard to essence, then in regard to power, and so, after that, what they are in regard to energy. But as thou hast now put the question in reference to certain peculiarities which distinguish them, thou speakest only of the peculiarities of energies. Hence thou askest the difference in them in respect to the last things as mentioned, but art passing over unnoticed, without questioning, the first, and, as relating to the elements of variableness, the most important of them.

Moreover, there is something added in the same place in regard to "active or passive motions." This is a classification not at all proper as relates to the Superior races; for in none of them is there the contrast of active and passive, but certain of their energies are to be contemplated as unconditioned, unrestrained, and without relation to anything opposing. Hence we do not admit in regard to them that there are such motions as active and passive in respect to the soul. For

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*Plato defines *essence* as that which has "real being," and describes it as "colorless, formless and intangible, visible only to the mind or higher reason that guides the soul."

we do not concede self-motion from moving and being set in motion; but we suppose that there is a certain unique self-originating motion which is its very own, and not an aptitude derived from an outside source taking from it action in itself and a passive condition by itself. Who, then, may admit in respect to the races superior to the soul that they are to be distinguished by the peculiarities of active and passive motions?*

Further, therefore, that expression which is added, "or things consequent," is inconsistent with their nature. For in the case of those of composite nature, and of those that exist together with others or in others, or that are encompassed by others, some are conceived of as leading and others as following, some as being themselves essences and others as contingent upon essences. For there is an arrangement of them in regular order, and there intervenes unfriendliness and disagreement between them. But in regard to the superior races, they are all to be considered as self-subsisting. The perfect ones take rank as chiefs, and are separate by themselves, and neither have their substance from others or in others. Thus there is nothing about them that is "consequent." In no respect, therefore, is their peculiarity characterized from these.

And now there occurs at the end of the question the natural distinction. The question is whether the essences are to be known by energies, physical motions, and things consequent. Everything, however, is to the contrary. For as the energies and motions made up the actual substance of the essence, they would themselves likewise be dominant in regard to their difference. If, however, the essences generate the energies, being themselves previously separate, then they impart to the motions, energies, and things consequent, that which constitutes the differences. This mode, therefore, is contrary to what is supposed in the present hunt to find the peculiarity.

In short, however, whether thou imaginest that there is

*Plato bases upon this fact the immortality of the soul. The soul originates its own action and receptivity by volition. This volition is self-motion, and is that quality of moral freedom which has placed human beings above and apart from the animal tribes.

one race of gods and one of demons, and in like manner of heroes (or half-gods), and after the same course of things, of unbodied souls, or whether thou supposest that there are many races in each category, thou demandest that the distinguishing of them shall be according to peculiarities. For if thou supposest each race to be a unit, the whole arrangement of divine orders according to the more perfect classification* is overturned; however, they are defined by these according to race, as it may seem satisfactory, and there is not among them one common definition in relation to essence except that those that are prior are distinguished from the inferior races, it is not possible to find out their common boundaries. And even though it should be possible, this very thing takes away their peculiarities. Hence the object which is sought is not to be found in this way. He, however, will be able to define their peculiarities who reasons upon the analogous sameness in the higher orders; as, for example, with the many races among the gods, and again with those among the dæmons and half-gods, and lastly with souls. Hence it has been demonstrated by us through this argument what is the right course of the present investigation, its limitation, and how it is possible for it to be made.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUPERIOR ORDERS

Let us next proceed with the answers, one after another, to the questions which have been asked. There is then the Good: both that which is beyond essence and that which exists through essence. I am speaking of that essence which is the most ancient and most to be revered, and which, as to itself, is incorporeal.† It is a special peculiarity of the gods, and is

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*In the Assyrian or Chaldæan Plan of Divine Orders, the following are instanced by Damaskios: 1. The Intellectible Gods. 2. The Hyparchs or superior archons. 3. The Archons. 4. The Archangels. 5. The Azoni or unclassified who belong to no defined jurisdiction. 6. Local Genii. This arrangement is hinted at in Part VIII, § 2.

†This is the common dogma of every ancient faith. In the Hindu category, the Brahman is the Good which is beyond essence and absolute, while Brahmá is identical with essence. The Parsis acknowledge Zeroana, the Unlimited, and Ahurmazda, the Divine Creator. The Egyptian priests worshiped Amun, the hidden One, and Ptah, the Demiurgos or Architect of the Universe.

characteristic of all the races that are included with them; and hence, not being divided from this, but existing in like manner the same in them all, it preserves their peculiar distribution and arrangement.

SOULS

But with souls that are ruling over bodies, that are occupied with the care of them, and that are placed in order apart by themselves in the eternal regions, before the transition to generated existence, there is not present either the essence of the Good, or the Cause (or Supreme Principle) of the Good which is prior to essence; but there comes from it a certain participation and habit of good, as we perceive that a sharing of beauty and virtue is very different from what we observe with human beings. For this is equivocal, and becomes manifest in complex natures as sole thing acquired. But the principle of goodness is established unchangeable and perpetual in the Souls. It never at any time goes away from itself, nor is it taken away by anything else.

DEMONS AND HEROES OR HALF-GODS

Such then being the case with the divine races, the first and the last (the gods and souls). let us consider the two races intermediate between these two extremes, namely: 1. That of heroes or half-gods, which not only ranks higher than the order of souls in power and virtue, moral beauty and greatness, and excells it in every good quality which is incident in souls, but is also closely joined to them by the kindred relationship of a similar form of life. 2. The other, the race of demons, which is closely allied to the gods, yet is in a certain sense inferior to them, following as though it was not first in rank but accompanying in subservience to the good pleasure of the gods. This race causes the otherwise invisible goodness of the gods to become visible in operation, becoming itself both assimilated to it, and accomplishing perfect works that are like it. For then what was before unutterable in it is made capable of being uttered, what was without form is caused to shine forth in visible figures, whatever of it was beyond all

reasoning is brought forth into plain words, and having already received the connate participation of beautiful gifts it bestows the same ungrudgingly, and transfers them to the races that rank after itself.

Thus these intermediate races complete the common bond of gods and souls and render the connection between them indissoluble. They not only bind these together in one continuous series, from those on high to the very last, but they make the union of them all incapable of being separated and to be a most perfect blending and an equal intermingling of them all. They likewise, after a manner, cause an outgoing influence to go forth equally from the superior to the inferior races and a reciprocal one from subordinate races to those ranking above them. They also establish order among the more imperfect races, and likewise due proportions of the gift coming down from the better ones and of the reception which takes place; and having themselves received from above from the gods the causes or motives of all these, they make everything agreeable and suited in every respect to all.

Thou must not think, therefore, that this classification is a peculiarity of powers or of energies or of essence; nor art thou taking them separately, to inspect them one by one. Nevertheless, by extending the inquiry through all of them thou wilt complete the answer to what was asked in relation to the peculiarities of gods, demons and half-gods, and of those that are included in the category of souls.

Let us proceed again, by another line of argument. Everything, whatever it may be, and of whatever quality, that is united, that is firmly established in itself by unalterable law and is a cause among the indivisible essences—that is immovable, and so is to be considered as the cause of all motion—that is superior to all things and has nothing whatever in common with them—that is to be generally considered as wholly unmingled and separate, not only in being but in power and energy—every such thing should be ascribed to the gods as being worthy of them. But that which is already divided into a great member, that which can give itself to other objects, that which both receives from others the limitation within

itself and is sufficient for the distribution among imperfect ones to make these complete, that nevertheless participates in the primary and life-giving motion* and has communion with all things self-existent and coming into existence, that receives a commingling of substances from them all and imparts a radiating influence from itself to all, and that extends these peculiar properties through all the powers, essences and energies in itself—all this, speaking what is true, we shall ascribe to souls, as being implanted in them.

THE INTERMEDIATE RACES

What shall we say, then, in regard to the intermediate races? I think from what has been said already that they are sufficiently manifest to every one; for they make complete the indivisible connection between the extreme races.† Nevertheless, it is necessary to continue the explanation. I assume, accordingly, the race of demons to be a multitude in one, to be commingled in an unmingled manner, and to accept the lower races as associated with a distinct concept of the most excellent. But on the other hand, I describe the race of heroes or demi-gods as being placed over more common distribution and multitude, and likewise over action and commingling, and matters akin to these. It also receives gifts from above, transcendent, and as though concealed within—I mean union, purity of nature, stable condition, and undivided identity and superiority over others. For each of these intermediate races is next to one of the extreme races beyond —one to the first and the other to the last. It follows as a natural result that by a continued series of kindred relations the demonian race, beginning from the highest in rank, pro-

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*Iamblichos is generally regarded as here endeavoring to reconcile the apparent discrepancy between Plato and Aristotle — the latter described the soul as immovable, and Plato as self-moving, in which statement he refers to operation and not to essence. Syrianos explains that the soul is self-moving because it is set in motion from itself and certainly not by an agent inferior to itself. Proklos adds that the soul is self-moved in respect to the body and things of sense which plainly are set in motion from without themselves.

†The gods above and the souls below, angels, demons and demigods.

ceeds to the lower races, and that the other, having primarily a connection with the last of them all, should in some way have communication with those that are superior.

Hence there may be perceived the complete joining together into one of the first and last races (the gods and souls) through the intermediates (the demons and half-gods), and the entire sameness of nature, alike equally in substance, and also alike in power and energy.* Whereas, therefore, we have made the classification of the four races in these two ways perfectly complete, we think it sufficient in regard to the others that for the sake of brevity, and because that which remains —the comprehending of the intermediate tribes—is in a measure already plain, we exhibit only the peculiarities of the extreme races. Hence we shall pass over the intermediate tribes as being already well known, and make a sketch of the others in some way in very few words.

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*This distinction of principles is noted in the *Chaldæan Oracles.* Pythagoras indicates the same by the terms monad, duad, triad; Plato by *πέρας, ἄπειρον* and *ρικτὸν*; Damaskios by the *One,* the *many,* and the *union.* Another version of the *Oracles* in place of "Substance" has *Father,* and for "energy" *Mind* or Reason.

III

THE SUPERIOR RACES

CHAPTER III

THE SUPERIOR RACES

PECULIARITIES OF THE GODS AND SOULS

In regard to the extreme races (the gods and souls) the former is chief, superior and perfect; the other is inferior and imperfect. The former can do all things at once uniformly and now; but the other is neither able to do anything completely nor immediately; neither speedily nor individually. The former generates all things and is guardian over them; but the latter has a natural disposition to yield and to turn submissively toward what it generates and has under guardianship. The former, being the original cause, has preeminence over all; but the latter, being dependent upon the pleasure of the gods as from a cause, is coëxistent with it from eternity. The former in a single decisive moment grasps the ends of all the energies and essences; but the latter passes from some things to others and goes forward from the imperfect to the perfect. Further still, there exists with the former the highest and unlimited, superior to all measurement, and so completely formless as to be circumscribed by no formative principles; but the latter is dominated by impulse, habit and inclination, and is held fast both by longings for that which is inferior and by being familiar with things of a secondary character. At length it is moulded in various ways and proportions from them. Hence MIND, the leader and king of the things that actually are, the demiurgic art of the universe, is always present with the gods in the same manner, completely and abundantly, being established in itself unalloyed according to one sole energy. But the soul partakes of divis-

ible and multiform mind,* adapting itself to the supreme authority over all. It also takes care of unsouled beings, having been itself born into various forms at different times. From the same causes, order itself and beauty itself are coexistent with the Superior races; or if it is desired so to express it, the First cause is coëxistent with these. But with the soul the allotment of intellective order and divine beauty is always associated. With the gods, the measure of all things, or rather the cause of it, is perpetually coördinate; but the soul is confined to the divine limit and only participates of this in a limited degree. With good reason there may be ascribed to the gods dominion over all beings, by the power and supreme authority of the First Cause; but the soul has defined limits within which it can have command.

Such being the different peculiarities of the races at the highest and lowest extremes, what we have now been saying may be understood without difficulty, and also the peculiarities of the intermediates, the demons and half-gods; these being each next to one of the extremes, resembling both and going out from both to the intermediate region, and so effecting a harmonious union by commingling them and joining them together in due proportions.

Let such, then, be considered the peculiarities of the first divine races.

DISTINCTIONS OF THE SUPERIOR RACES

Surely we do not admit the distinction of the Superior races to be what is suggested by thee: "a classification established by difference of bodies, the gods being distinguished by ætherial bodies, the demons by aërial bodies, and souls by

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*The *Chaldæan Oracles* also recognize this twofold mind. The one, the Pure Reason or Intelligence, was placed over the first Triad. "The Mind of the Father named all things in threes, and governed them all by Mind." This mind they considered as sole, unparticipating, and essential. The other was described as participant and divisible into parts or qualities.

bodies pertaining to the earth.'' Such an arrangement would be like the assigning of Sokrates to a tribe when he was a Prytanis,* and is not proper to be admitted in regard to the divine races, which are all by themselves, unbound and free.† To make bodies their own first causes, as to their specific nature, appears to be a fearful absurdity; for they are subservient to these causes and subject to the conditions of generated existence.

Further still, the races of Superior beings are not in the bodies, but govern them from outside. Hence they do not undergo changes with the bodies. Yet they give from themselves to the bodies every such good as the latter are able to receive, but they themselves receive nothing from the bodies. Hence they cannot have received from them any peculiarities. For if they were as habits of the bodies, or as material forms, or some other body-like quality, it might be possible for them, perhaps, to undergo change together with the different conditions of the bodies. But if they preëxist separate from bodies, and unmingled with them, what rational distinction originating from the bodies can be developed in them?

In fact, this proposition in regard to these races makes the bodies actually superior to the divine races, since by such a hypothesis they furnish a vehicle for the superior causes and fix in them the peculiarities incident to their essence. Nevertheless, it is plain that if the allotments, distributions and assignments of those that govern are arranged with those that are governed this authority will be given to the more excellent. For it is because those that are placed over others are such that they receive thereby such an allotment, and give

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*The Prytanis of Athens were fifty in number, and were selected from the Boulé or Senate. Sokrates, at the age of sixty, was chosen to that dignity.

†The Chaldean Theology did not unequivocally describe all the gods as "unbound." The seven cosmokrators, or rulers of the world, the lords of the zodiacal houses and the cosmic gods assigned to regions of the world, were bound to their respective jurisdictions.

this a specific character; but the essence itself does not become assimilated to the nature of the corporeal receptacle.*

Hence I may speak as regards this subject in its turn, but a supposition of this kind must be admitted in respect to the imperfect soul. For such a mode of living as the soul projected, and such an ideal as was ready before entering into a human body, there is a corresponding organic body, joined to it and a similar nature which receives its more perfect life.†

In respect to the superior races and those which as being universal include the origin of all, the inferior ones are produced in the superiors, the corporeal in the incorporeal, and, being encompassed by them in one circle, are governed by them. Hence the revolutions of the heavenly spheres‡ have been induced originally by the ætherial soul and are always inherent in it. The souls of the world also being extended to their own mind, are absolutely encompassed by it and primarily generated in it. In like manner also, the Mind, both that which is divisible (into attributes and qualities) and that

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*The preëxistence of the soul in the eternal world, before becoming involved in the genesis and conditions of the earth-life, was generally believed. Even after being set free at death, it was supposed to be, after a period of less or greater length, again attracted back to the mundane sphere. Plato illustrates this by the Vision of Eros in the *Republic*. The choice of the earthly condition is made by the soul itself, and very generally it differs from what it had been in the preceding term of life in the world. "The cause is in him who makes the choice, and the divinity is without blame in the matter." Eros adds that after the souls had chosen their new lives according as they drew the lots, they all went in their order to Lachesis, and she gave to every one the demon that he had chosen, and sent the demon along with him to be the guardian genius of his life, and the accomplisher of the fate which he had chosen. Then he was born anew into the earth.

†The cause or incentive for the coming of the soul into generated life is variously explained by different writers. According to Plotinus, the universal soul does not come to a body as the body may come to it, nor does the body contain the soul, but is contained by it. Simplikios accepted the statement of Iamblichos, that "the soul projects certain lives for itself."

‡The stars and planets were regarded as abodes or receptacles of souls.

which is entire, is included (as essential quality) of the superior races. Hence the secondary races, being always turned toward the primary, and the superiors leading the inferiors as exemplars, essence and ideal come to the lower races from those which are superior, and those which are ignoble are produced primarily in the more excellent. Hence, accordingly, order and proportion come from the latter to the inferior races, and these are what they are through the former. But there is no transmitting of peculiarities from the inferior races to those which precede them.

Such a classification, therefore, based on corporeal conceptions, is shown by these arguments to be false. Even though in this case it may seem otherwise to thee, the false assumption is not worthy of a word. Such a case does not exhibit abundant argument, but one belabors himself to no purpose if he puts forth hypotheses and then endeavors to refute them as not being true. For in what way is essence, which is absolutely incorporeal, having nothing in common with the bodies that partake of it, to be distinguished from such bodies? Not being in any way present with the bodies as a matter of place, how is it to be separated by places after the corporeal manner? And not being separated by circumscribed divisions of subject matter, how is it to be held in a divided condition by the divisions of the world? But what is more, what is there that can hinder the gods from going everywhere? What is there to hold their power in check, from extending to the vault of the sky? For this would be the work of a cause far mightier than the one shutting them in and circumscribing them within certain parts. Real being—that which truly is, and which is in itself incorporeal—is everywhere, wherever it pleases. Yet, as thou takest for granted, that which is divine and which transcends all things is itself transcended by the perfectness of the entire world, and is encompassed by it in a specific division, and hence is inferior in respect to bodily dimensions. Yet if there is no divine creation and no participation of divine ideals extending through the whole world, I do not see, for my part, any opportunity for a creating and framing of them after specific forms.

In short, however, this opinion which banishes the presence of the superior races entirely from the earth is an abrogating of the Sacred Rites and theurgic communion of the gods with human beings. For it says nothing else than that the divine ones dwell apart from the earth, that they do not commingle with human beings, and that this region is deserted by them. Consequently, according to this reasoning we priests have never learned anything whatever from the gods, and since we differ in nothing from other men thou hast not done right in questioning us as though we knew more than others.

Not one of these statements of thine, however, is sound. For neither are the gods limited to parts of the earth, nor are the inferior races about the earth excluded from their presence. On the contrary, the superior races are characterized in this way: that they are encompassed by nothing and that they encompass all things in themselves. But those that belong to the earth have their being in the perfections (pleromas) of the gods, and when they become fit for the divine communion they at once, prior to their own essence, possess the gods that preëxisted in it.

That this entire classification is false, that this plan of investigating peculiarities is irrational, and that the notion of distributing the gods each to a certain region does not permit the receiving of the entire essence and power which are in them, we have fully established. It would have been right, therefore, to omit the dissenting inquiry in regard to the distribution of the Superior races, as it contradicts nothing in regard to the true conceptions. On the other hand, our attention should be directed, instead, to the intelligent perception of matters relating to the gods, and not to the holding of a discussion with a man; and for this reason we shall adapt the present discourse to the disposing of subjects of probability and matters relating to the gods.

HOW DIVINE RACES ARE DISTRIBUTED

I assume accordingly that thou askest a solution of that matter of which thou seemest to be in doubt, namely: "As the gods dwell only in Heaven, why are invocations at the

Theurgic Rites directed to them as being of the Earth and Underworld?''

This position which is thus assumed at the beginning, namely: that the gods traverse heaven only, is not true; for the universe is full of them. But thou then demandest: ''How is it that although possessing power unlimited, undivided and unrestricted, some of them are mentioned as being of the water and of the atmosphere, and that others are allotted by definite limitation to different places and distinct parts of bodies? If they are actually separated by circumscribed limitations of parts, and according to diversities of places and subject-bodies, how will there be any union of them one to another?''

One most excellent solution of all these and an infinite number of similar questions is by a survey of the manner in which the gods are allotted.

This, then, is the explanation: Whether the allotment be to certain parts of the universe, as to heaven or earth, whether to holy cities and regions, whether to certain temple-precincts or sacred images, the divine irradiation shines upon them all from the outside, just as the sun illuminates every object from without with its rays. Hence, as the light encompasses the objects that it illuminates, so also the power of the gods comprehends from without those that participate of it. In like manner, also, as the light of the sun is present in the air without being combined with it—and it is evident that there is nothing left in the air when the illuminating agent is removed, although warmth is still present when the heating has entirely ceased—so also the light of the gods shines while entirely separate from the objects illuminated, and, being firmly established in itself, makes its way through all existing things.

Still further, the light that is the object of perception is one, continuous, and everywhere the same entirety; so that it is not possible for a part of it to be cut off by itself, or to be enclosed in a circle, or at any time to remove itself from the source of illumination. According to the same principles, therefore, the whole universe, being susceptible of division, is distinguished with reference to the one and indivisible light of the gods. In short, this light is one and the same every-

where, and is not only present, undivided, with all things that are capable of participating of it, but it, likewise, by an absolute power and by an infinite superiority, fills all things, as a cause, joins them together in itself, unites them everywhere with itself, and combines the ends with the beginnings. The whole heaven, including with it the universe imitating this, goes around in a circular revolution, unites all to itself, and leads the elements whirling in a circle; and all things being in one another, and borne toward one another, it holds them together and defines their equal proportions; and guiding them to the remotest distances, makes the ends combine with the beginnings—as, for example, the earth with the sky—and effects a sole connection and accord of wholes with wholes.

Who, then, that contemplates the visible image of the gods thus united as one* will not have too much reverence for the gods, its causes, to entertain a different judgment and to introduce among them artificial divisions, arbitrary distinctions, and corporeal outlines? I, for one, do not think that any one would be so disposed. For if there is neither any analogy, nor scheme of proportion, nor interblending in respect to power or simple energy of that which is set in order with that which sets in order,† then I say that there is nothing existing in it, either of extension or in regard to distance, or of encompassing locally, or of division by due setting apart, or of any other such natural equalizing of qualities in the presence of the gods with beings inferior in their nature. For in natures that are homogeneous in essence and power, or that are in some manner of similar form or alike in race, there can be perceived an encompassing or holding fast. But in the case of those that are totally exempt from all these conditions, what

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*Plato affirms this in the *Epinomis*. "It is Heaven that we should honor," says he; "it is the cause of all benefits to us." Abammon, doubtless, alludes to Ra. of the Egyptian Pantheon, who was regarded as the source of light, and also as being the whole heaven united as one eikon and personality.

†Proklos reiterates this declaration, so often insisted upon, that the superior nature and essence can receive nothing from one that is inferior.

opposing circumstance in respect to these things, or pathways through them all, or separate outline, or encompassing in some prescribed space, or anything of this kind, can be justly conceived? On the other hand, I think that they who are partakers of the gods* are, every one, of such a nature as to partake of them according to their own intrinsic quality, some as of the æther, others as of the atmosphere, and others as of the water; which the technique of the Divine Performances recognizes,† and so makes use of the adaptations and invocations according to such a classification.

So much may be stated in regard to the distribution of the superior races in the world.

SUPERIOR BEINGS NOT CLASSIFIED AS PASSIVE AND IMPASSIBLE

After these distinctions thou suggestest another classification on thy own account, and separatest the essences of the superior races by the differentiation of "passive and impassible." I do not, however, by any means accept this classification. For no one of the superior races is passive, nor yet is it impassible in such a manner as to be thus contradistinguished from any that is susceptible, as being adapted by nature to receive impressions, or as freed from them through inherent virtue or some other excellent condition. On the other hand, it is on this account, because they are entirely exempt from the inconsistency of being either passive or not passive, because they are in no way susceptible to impression, and because they are unchangeably fixed in regard to essence, that I set them down in all these respects as impassive and unchangeable.

Consider, if thou art willing, the last one of the divine races, the soul pure from the defilement of bodies. Being

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*Intelligent readers will understand from what has been said, that as the gods are spiritual essences, the partaking of them, or, in other words, of their irradiation, is analogous to the partaking of light. The luminance itself is in no way affected, but the partaker is filled and pervaded by it.

†This is the Theurgic Rite. "This Theurgy," says Thomas Taylor, "is, doubtless, the same as the 'Magic of Zoroaster,' which was no 'black art,' but a peculiar mode of worship."

superior to the realm of nature, and living the unbegotten life, what does it want of the generated life with sensual pleasure and of the restoration thereby into the realm of nature?* Being outside of everything corporeal, and of the nature which is divisible in respect to the body, and being likewise entirely separate from the accord in the soul which goes down into the body, why is it to participate of the pain that leads to decay and dissolution of the structure of the body? On the contrary, it has no occasion for the susceptibilities which are forerunners of sensation, for it is neither held at all in a body nor in any way environed by it so as to have occasion for bodily organs in order to perceive different bodies outside of these organs. In short, however, being indivisible, remaining in the one same form, being essentially incorporeal, and having nothing in common with the generating and susceptible body, it can be affected by nothing in regard to classification or transformation, nor in short has it any concern whatever with change or condition.

But on the other hand, whenever the soul comes into the body it is not itself, nor are the rational faculties which it imparts to the body susceptible to impression.† For these are simple and single ideals, not admitting any disturbing element or entrancement, so far as relates to them. It is, therefore, the something that yet remains that is the cause of such experience to the composite nature. Nevertheless, the cause is not in any way the same as the effect.‡ Hence, the Soul being

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*The soul was called by Damaskios, our last echo of Divinity. In the mundane region it was considered as not a whole and united essence, but as divided into qualities and traits of character.

†Plotinos, using the comparison that the workman does not contract the imperfections of his tools, remarks that it is not necessary that the soul shall be itself affected by the conditions of the body. It simply uses the body as its instrument. It is incorporeal, and hence the passions and susceptibilities of the body do not penetrate into its substance, but only into its powers and energies.

‡Proklos illustrates this by the analogy of a man viewing his own image in a stream of water. He is unchanged in his own person and individuality, but the image exhibits great perturbation. So the soul contemplates its own image as reflected in the body, and though it is itself impassible and unaffected, it may be perplexed by the incidental disturbances.

the first genesis and origin of the composite living beings that come into existence and pass to dissolution, is itself, so far as relates to itself, unbegotten and imperishable; so also those that participate of the soul are susceptible to impression and do not possess life and essence in their completeness, but are entangled in the indefiniteness and alien conditions of the realm of matter.* Yet the soul, as relates to itself, is unchangeable, as being in its own essence superior to impression, and as neither being moved by any preference inclining in both directions (passiveness and impassibility), nor as receiving an acquired versatility in the participating of habitude and power.

Since, therefore, we have shown, in respect to the last race of the superior orders, namely, the soul, that it is impossible for it to participate in any passive or impressionable condition, how is it proper to attribute this participation to demons and half-gods who are sempiternal and follow the gods, and themselves according to their respective grades preserve, and likewise in their several places make the regular arrangement of the divine beings always complete, and do not leave any unoccupied space between the different orders? For this we know for certain: that the passive condition is not only undisciplined but also discordant and unstable, never being in any case its own master, but attached to that by which it is held fast and to which it is subservient in reference to the sphere of generated existence. This condition of passiveness, therefore, pertains to some other race rather than to one always existing and allied to the gods, not only maintaining the same arrangement but likewise going around the same circuit with them. Hence, therefore, the demons, and all who rank with them after the superior races, are impassible.

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*Greek, *ὕλη;* wood, rubbish; the negative or inert quality called matter, from which natural objects proceed. Aristotle first adopted the term. Plato, unable to conceive of matter as substance *per se,* made use of terms signifying the "nurse" and the "receptacle" or passive force. The term "matter" is from *materia,* the mother-principle. The phrase "realm of matter" is adopted here, as the term implies a department in the universe, and not simply matter itself.

IV

RITES, SYMBOLS AND OFFERINGS

CHAPTER IV

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"Why then, are many ceremonies performed histrionically in the Sacred Rites, as though the gods were moved by passion?"

I think that this is said without an intelligent understanding in regard to the Sacerdotal technique of the Mysteries. For of the ceremonies performed from time to time in the Sacred Rites, some have an ineffable cause and a divine principle; others are consecrated to the Superior beings from eternity as symbols are consecrated*; others preserve some other image, just as Nature, the Supreme Genetrix also from invisible concepts, molds visible semblances. Others are brought forward from some motive of veneration,† or they are endeavors at figurative representation, or some concept of a family relationship. Some prepare us for something that is useful, or in some way purify and free our human passions, or turn away some of the evils that may be impending over us. Yet it may not be admitted that any part of the Holy Observance is performed to the gods or demons as to impressionable beings. For the essence which is subjectively everlasting and incorporeal is not of a nature to permit any change from the bodies (offered at the Rites.‡

*Symbols constituted a prominent feature in the ancient religious worship. They were undoubtedly to a large extent fetishes, there being a measure of the essence and operation of the deity supposed to exist in them. The Egyptian, and indeed the whole Oriental worship consisted of them, and even at the present time, there is no ritual that is without them. But then, human language is made up of symbols and representative sounds.

†This is distinctly denied in Part V, Chapter VI.

‡See Part V, Chapters II and IV.

Not even though it be admitted that it has use especially of such a kind, would it ever need it from human beings in a religious service of this kind. It is supplied from itself, and from the nature (or feminine principle) of the world, and from the abundance which is in the genesis (or generative energy); and if it is permissible to say this likewise, it receives a sufficiency before it can be in any want, through the unfailing complete supply of the world and its own ample abundance, and because all the superior races are fully supplied with the good things pertaining to them respectively. Let there be, therefore, this general encouragement for us in regard to the worship of the uncontaminate races, that they are likewise affiliated by kindred relationship to the beings that are otherwise superior to us, and on this account the pure are attracted to the pure, and the impassive to the impassive.

Following every point in its turn, we remark that the planting of "phallic images" is a special representing of the procreative power by conventional symbols, and that we regard this practice as an invocation to the generative energy of the universe. On this account many of these images are consecrated in the spring, when all the world is receiving from the gods the prolific force of the whole creation.*

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*The custom here described was universal in ancient times, and it is still found in parts of India. Its remains also exist in architecture and ornamentation. In the worship of the Ashera and Venus of Eryx, and of the Great Mother in Syria and Western Asia, the observances were carried to greater extremes. King Asa of Judea is said to have deposed his mother, Maacha, from royal dignity for her participation—"because she made a phallos to an Ashera," I *Kings* I, XIV. It has been generally believed that the Festivals and Initiatory, or Perfective Rites, of the different countries, included the same feature, as indeed, is here admitted. It should be borne in mind, however, before any hasty judgment, that the different faiths had their two sides, like the right or the left, and that worshippers regarded them and took part in them according to their inherent disposition. Thus, in India, there are the Asceticsiva-worshippers, and the Saktas, to this day. In this way the Mysteries presented themes for the highest veneration, as well as phases that are esteemed as gross and lascivious. Every curious person, therefore, sees in them what he has eyes to see, and is often blind to the rest.

I think, however, that the immodest language to which you refer, affords an illustration of the absence of moral virtues* in the realm of matter, and the unseemly rudeness existing beforehand with the unformed elements that are to be organized. These being utterly destitute of orderly arrangement, are passionately eager for it, so to speak, to such a degree as they are conscious of the unbecoming condition of things around themselves. Hence, again, perceiving from the speaking of vile utterances, what is vile, they follow to the (divine) sources of the ideals and moral beauties.

They accordingly not only turn aside from evil action, but through the words, it is manifest in its forms and changes the impulse to a contrary direction.†

There is, however, still another reason of analogous character for these customs. The powers of the human passions that are in us, when they are barred on every side, become more vehement: but when they are brought into activity with moderation and reasonable measure, they are sufficiently delighted and satisfied, and becoming made pure in consequence, are won over and set at rest. In the same way, likewise, in comedy and tragedy, when we behold the emotions of others, we repress our own, make them more moderate and are puri-

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*Greek, *Καλών* from *Καλύν*, good, beauty, moral virtue, excellence. Mr. M. W. Hazeltine, in the *New York Sun,* remarks upon this apparent confounding of moral with physical beauty, which this word exhibits, that "the ancients had not that conception which forms the basis and aim of Æsthetics in our time. To a Greek, if a thing was beautiful it was good, and if it was good it was beautiful; that, at least, was the prevailing attitude of the Hellenic mind."

†These opinions were anciently entertained, the universe itself being regarded not as a fabric but as a birth, a creation or genesis, and evolution. But the philosophers generally disapproved of the doleful rites and immodest speech. Plutarch enumerates the various practices, such as the eating of raw flesh, the days of fasting and mourning for the slain divinity, (*Matthew* XI, 16; *Amos* VIII, 10) and the uttering of filthy and unseemly language. He explains that they were "not in honor of the gods, but rather to avert, mollify and appease the wrath of evil demons." The Emperor Julian, however, forbade the using of words that should not be spoken or heard.

fied from them. In the Sacred Rites, also, we are, by certain spectacles and relations of ugly things, delivered from the harm that is likely to befall through the events represented by them.*

Things of this character are brought into use, therefore, for the healing of the soul within us, the moderating of the evils which have become natural to it through the genesis† or nativity, and likewise for the sake of its unloosing and deliverance from its bonds. On this account, probably, Herakleitos names them "*Remedies*"‡ as being cures for terrible maladies, and restoring the souls sound from the experiences incident in the generated life.

WHAT THE INVOCATIONS ACCOMPLISH

But the objection is also made: "The invocations are made as to gods that are impressionable beings; so that it is implied that not the demons only are impressionable, but the gods likewise."

This, however, is not as thou hast supposed. For the illumination which is present through the invocations is self-

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*"This doctrine is so rational," says Mr. Thomas Taylor, "that it can never be objected to by any but quacks in philosophy and religion. For as he is nothing more than a quack in medicine who endeavors to remove a latent bodily disease before he has called it forth externally, and by this means diminished its fury, so he is nothing more than a pretender in philosophy, who attempts to remove the passions by violent repression, instead of moderate compliance and gentle persuasion."

†By the genesis or generation, Plutarch explains Plato to mean "only that substance or underlying principle which is subject to change and motion, placed between the forming cause and the thing formed, transmitting hither those shapes and figures which have been contrived and modelled" in the eternal world. Hence it means more than mere procreating, it is no less than transition from eternity where the soul is native, into the region of time and space, where it is only a sojourner.

‡The Library of Alexandria bore the inscription of "*Remedies for the Soul.*" A similar term is said to have been placed over the collection of Papyri in the "House of Seti" at Thebes, in Egypt.

appearing and self-subsisting; it is also far removed from the being attracted downward, and goes forth into manifestation through the divine energy and perfection, and it excels voluntary choice and activity by so far as the Divine Purpose of the Absolute Goodness is superior to the deliberately chosen of life. By such a purpose, therefore, the gods being gracious and propitious, give forth light abundantly to the Theurgists, both calling their souls upward into themselves, providing for them union to themselves in the Chorus,* and accustoming them, while they are still in the body, to hold themselves aloof from corporeal things, and likewise to be led up to their own eternal and noetic First Cause.†

From these Performances‡ it is plain, that what we are now discoursing about is the Safe Return of the Soul, for while contemplating the Blessed Spectacles,§ the soul reciprocates another life, is linked with another energy, and rightly viewing the matter, it seems to be not even a human,

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*Plato describes this chorus in the *Phaidros*. "Divine beauty was then splendid to the view," says he, "when we, in company with Zeus, and others with other gods, beheld together with the Blessed Chorus, the divine Spectacle and were initiated into the Perfective Rites, which are rightly called most happy. Being ourselves entire and unaffected by the evils which await us in the Aftertime, we took part in the Orgiac Drama, and having become both Mystics and Beholders (mystæ and epoptæ) we beheld in the pure light, apparitions that were complete, unique, calm and felicitous—being ourselves pure from earthly contamination and not encompassed in this investiture which we now call 'Body' and by which we are carried about, fastened like an oyster to his shell."

†Sokrates in his last discourse remarks that "While we live we shall approach nearest to the superior knowledge if we hold no partnership with the body, except what absolute necessity requires, and do not permit ourselves to be tainted by its nature, but keep ourselves uncontaminated by it till God himself shall release us." This is what a later poet has portrayed as living above while in the world.

‡The dramas or performances of the Mystic or Theurgic Rites and their ulterior significance are here denoted—the experiences of the Soul and its return to the Eternal World, as it enters into the conditions of worldly existence. The Egyptian "Book of the Dead" treats of the same matters.

§The histrionic scenes and ceremonies which were exhibited to the Beholders of the Rites.

for the most blessed energy of the gods. If, indeed, the upward way through the invocations effects for the priests a purifying of the passions, a release from the condition of generated life, and likewise a union to the Divine First Cause, why, indeed, does any one impute to it any of the passions?* For such invocation does not draw down beings that are impassive and pure, to that which is susceptible and impure. On the contrary, it makes us who had become impressionable through the generated life, pure and steadfast.†

On the other hand, even the "favorable inclinations" do not bring the priests into union with the gods through a passive condition, but they open the way for an indissoluble communion through the attraction which binds the universe together. It is by no means, as the term seems to imply, an inclining of the *mind* of the gods to human beings, but on the contrary, as the truth itself will teach the adapting of the human intelligence to the participating of the gods, leading it upward to them, and bringing it into accord through persuasive harmonies. Hence, both the reverend names of the gods, and the other divine symbols, being of an elevating tendency, are able to connect the invocation with the gods.‡

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*The *Chaldæan Oracles* reiterate this sentiment.

"The soul of articulate-speaking men will in some way bring God into itself.

"Holding fellowship with nothing mortal, it is all intoxicated with God."

†This is explained by the hierophant in Moore's romance, *The Epicurean.* The aim of the initiation and "blessed spectacle" is thus set forth; "to retrieve the ruin of the blessed soul, to clear away from around her the clouds of earth, and, restoring her lost wings, facilitate her return to Heaven—such is the great task of our religion, and such the triumph of those Divine Mysteries, in whose inmost depths the life and essence of our holy religion is treasured."

‡The names of the gods in the ancient Skythic and Euphratean languages were believed to possess some inherent virtue as well as charm. Hence the *Oracle* gives the injunction:

"Never change the barbarous names;
For among them are terms God-given,
That have ineffable virtue in Sacred Rites."

Proklos also declares that "the gods are readily persuaded by invocations and enable the initiants to behold perfect, tranquil, and genuine spectacles."

PROPITIATORY RITES

What is more, "the propitiations of anger" will be plain enough if we learn thoroughly what the anger of the gods really is. It certainly is not, as some imagine, an inveterate and persistent rage. On the contrary, so far as the matter relates to the gods, it is a turning away from their beneficent guardianship. We ourselves turn away from this just as we bring darkness upon ourselves by shutting away the light at noon-day and so rob ourselves of the priceless gift of the gods. Hence the "propitiation" can turn us to the participation of the superior nature,* lead us to the guardian fellowship of the gods, which we had cast from us, and bind to each other harmoniously both those participating and the essences participated. Hence so far is it from accomplishing its particular work through a passive condition, that it leads us to desist from any passionate and disorderly turning away from the gods.

Nevertheless, because evil is present in the regions of the earth,† the "expiatory sacrifices" act as a remedy and prepare us so that no change or any passive condition may occur with reference to us. Hence, whether it is through the gods or demons that a result of this kind takes place, it appeals to them as helpers, averters of evil, and as saviors, and through them turns away every harm that may be liable to follow from what has occurred. Let it be understood that those superior powers that turn away the blows incident to the realm of nativity and nature, are not preventing them in any way through passive conditions.

Indeed, if anyone has imagined that the intercepting of

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*Epistle of *Peter* II, 1, 4, "That by these ye might be partakers or communicants of the divine nature."

†Plato: Thætetos. "It is necessary that there should be always something opposed to God; and it cannot be seated among the gods, but of necessity hovers around this mortal nature and this region of earth."

the protecting influence may bring on some chance injury, the endeavor at persuading of the Superior races "through the expiatory sacrifices" recalling them to their generosity, and taking away the sense of privation, may be in every respect pure and unchangeable.*

"THE NECESSITIES OF THE GODS"

Further still, we will consider what are called "the necessities of the gods." The whole fact is this: The "necessities" are peculiarities of the gods, and exist as pertaining to gods, not indeed as from without, nor as from compulsion; but, on the contrary, as the goodness is of use from necessity, so also are they likewise in every particular and they are not in any respect otherwise inclined. Such necessity is itself combined with a purpose ideally good and is the beloved consort of Love.†

It is not only the same and unalterable in the order pertaining to the gods, but because it is at the same time, and in like manner, circumscribed in one boundary, it abides in this and never goes out of it. For all these reasons the very contrary takes place to what was inferred. If in Theurgy there are really genuine powers of such a character as we have set forth, the conclusion is inevitable that the Divine Being is proof against enchantment, impassive and not to be compelled.

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*It was held that the vital emanation from the blood of the sacrificed animals was invigorating to spiritual beings (*Odyssey,* Book XI). But Plutarch is severe about it. He affirms that the murderous and lascivious customs at the festivals only served "to avert and appease the malice of certain evil spirits, or to satisfy the violent and raging lusts of some that either could not, or would not, enjoy with their bodies or by their bodies." Such, he declared, bring plagues and famine into towns, raise wars and dissensions, till such time as they obtain and enjoy that which they love.

†Proklos affirms that the Divine Necessity was always coincident with the Divine Will and Purpose. Plato explains it as a habitude of the Efficient Cause or Author of Existence and Matter. Thus, also, there is a necessity in the thoughts and actions of human beings, yet the soul is self-moving, and so is its own "Cause."

SUPPLICATIONS AND THEIR UTILITY

Nevertheless, after this, thou passest over to another classification of gods as contrasted with demons. For thou remarkest that "gods are pure mental essences," proposing the opinion as the basis of an argument, or telling it as acceptable to certain individuals. Then thou addest: "that the demons are psychic beings, participating of mind."

It is not hidden from me that these notions are entertained by many of the Grecian philosophers.* Nevertheless, I do not think it proper to hide from thee the manifest truth, for all opinions of such a character are somewhat confusing. They carry the attention from demons to souls, for these are also partakers of mind; and they wander from the gods to mind that is non-material in respect to operation which the gods excel in every particular. Why, then, should we attribute these peculiarities to them, which are by no means exclusively theirs? This much will be sufficient in regard to this classification. Otherwise, so far as it may be thought worthy of a mention of such a kind, it is overmuch. But in regard to the matters of which thou art in doubt, they should have due attention inasmuch as they have to do with the sacerdotal function.

Having further affirmed that "pure mental essences are not to be charmed or mingled with things of sense," thou doubtest whether it is necessary to pray to them. On my part, I do not think it necessary to pray to any others. For that something in us that is divine, mental essence and one—or mental alone, if you choose to call it so—is then vividly aroused in the prayers, and when it is awakened it longs vehemently for its counterpart, and becomes united to the absolute perfection.

If, however, it appears incredible to thee that an incorporeal being hears a voice in any way, and there is need of a special sense and of ears in order that the things uttered

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*Thales, Pythagoras, Plato and the Stoics generally held that the demons were beings of a psychic, rather than of an actual divine nature. Plutarch ascribed to them only a limited term of existence.

by us in the prayers may be heard, thou art voluntarily forgetful of the superior powers of the Primary Cause, both in the perceiving of all things, and the encompassing of them at once in themselves. The gods certainly do not receive the prayers in themselves through faculties of sense, or through organs, but they encompass in themselves the full purport and energies of the pious utterances, and especially of those which happen through the Sacred Rites to have been established and brought into one with the gods. For then the Divine essence itself is simply present to itself, and does not share the conceptions in the prayers as distinct from itself.

But thou affirmest that "the supplications which are offered are entirely foreign to the purity of mental substances." Not at all: for it is on this very account, because we are excelled by the gods in power, purity and everything, that it is most opportune to supplicate them even with exaggeration of speech. If we are judged by being compared to the gods, the consciousness of our own nothingness causes us to betake ourselves to supplication, and we are led from supplication to the object of supplication, and from the familiar intercourse we acquire a similarity to it,* and from imperfection we quietly receive the Divine Perfection.†

If, however, it is conceived that the sacerdotal supplications are inspired into human beings as from the gods themselves, that they are symbols or tokens of the very gods, and are recognized by the gods alone, and have likewise after a certain manner the same power with the gods, how may it be justly supposed that supplication of this kind is still a mat-

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*It may be observed in this treatise that the divine personalities are very commonly indicated by terms in the neuter gender. The same is true in other instances. Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson was once in conversation with the Rev. Cyrus Bartol, the Transcendentalist clergyman of Boston. The latter mentioned the Supreme Being, using the masculine pronoun. "Why not say 'It,'" Mr. Emerson asked?

†Whatever we keep most closely in thought, whether with favor or aversion, we gradually become like in character. Paul wrote like a philosopher to the Corinthian disciples. After referring to Moses with a vail, he adds: "We all with face unvailed, looking on the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, are transformed from glory to glory into the same image from his spirit."

ter of the physical senses, but not divine and of the higher intelligence? Or, what may in any likelihood insinuate itself into it when the most excellent human morals cannot be easily made pure?*

"But," it is remarked by thee, "the things that are offered are offered as to sensitive and psychic natures." If, indeed, they consisted of corporeal and composite powers alone, or of such as pertained merely to the service of the physical organism, thou wouldst be correct. But since the offerings partake also of incorporeal ideals, special discourses and simpler metres, the peculiar affinity of the offerings is to be considered from this point alone. And if any kindred relationship, near or far away, or any resemblance is present, it is sufficient for the union about which we are now discoursing. For there is not anything which is in the least degree akin to the gods, with which the gods are not immediately present and conjoined. It is not, then, as to "sensitive or psychic," but actually to divine ideals and to the gods themselves, that the intimate union is effected so far as may be. Hence we have spoken sufficiently in opposition to this classification.

CLASSIFICATION CRITICISED

The next thing in thy letter is the question, "Are gods separated from demons by the distinction of bodied and unbodied?"†

This distinction is much more common than the former one; but it is so far from indicating their peculiarities of essence, that it does not even constitute a reasonable guess in

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*In the Theurgic discipline of neophytes, there were several stages to be surmounted before arriving at the degree denominated "Perfection" or purity. We may trace them in the chapter, as follows: 1. The coming to the divinity who is supplicated. 2. The assimilation into the likeness of the divinity, and 3. Perfection. In the first of these degrees the candidate was styled Most Excellent; in the second, Divine; and in the third, Theopator; as now being fully identified with Deity itself.

†Origen affirmed that the angels have bodies, and that God alone is a spiritual essence, without body. Hence the clause in the Confession, "without body, parts or passions."

respect to them, or anything incident to them. For it is not possible from these things to apprehend intelligently whether they are living beings or beings without life, and whether they are deprived of life or do not need it at all. Besides, also, it is not easy to form a judgment as to how these terms are to be applied, whether in common or in relation to many different things. If they are to be applied in common, if both a piece of writing and a period of time, a god and demons likewise, and also fire and water, are under the same class as being incorporeal, the distinction is absurd. If, however, they are employed with reference to the chief differences, why, when thou speakest of incorporeal things, dost thou indicate gods rather than tokens; or when thou sayest "body" why should it not be taken to mean the Earth rather than demons? For this point is not itself defined, whether they have bodies as a part of themselves, or are carried by bodies as a vehicle, or make use of them on occasion, or encompass them, or are merely identical with the body.

Perhaps, however, it is not necessary to scrutinize this distinction critically; for thou dost not put it forward as thy own concept, but on the contrary, displayest it as the conjecture of others.

THE GODS OF THE SKY NOT CORPOREAL

We will, therefore, take up in place of this subject, the matter in relation to the present opinion, about which thou seemest to be in doubt. For thou hast proposed this question: "If only the gods are incorporeal, how shall the Sun, the Moon, and the luminaries visible in the sky, be accounted as gods?"

We reply: That they are not encompassed by the bodies, but that on the contrary, they encompass the bodies with their own divine lives and energies; also that they are not converted to the body, but possess the body which has been converted to the divine cause; and that the body does not interfere with their spiritual and incorporeal completeness, nor occasion any obstacle to it by intervening. Hence it does not even require more attention, but follows (the divinities) after

a manner spontaneously, and by its own motion, not needing a self-operating superintendence, but urging on by itself* uniformly by the leading of the gods upward toward the One.†

If, however, it is necessary, we will say this: The body (of the divine guardian of the star) in the sky is very closely akin to the incorporeal essence of the gods. For the essence being one, the other is unique; that being undifferentiable this is undivided; that being unchangeable this is in like manner unchanged.‡ But if even it is taken for granted the energies of the gods are after one ideal, the divine one in the sky has also a single orbit. Nevertheless it also imitates their sameness in respect of a perpetual activity constantly in the same manner, by the same impulses, according to one law and one order of arrangement; and also the life of the gods which is the life natural to the bodies in the æther. Hence, their body is not constituted of incongruous and different elements in the way that our body is composed; nor does their soul join with the body to bring out from two, one living being. On the contrary, the living forms of the gods in the sky are, in every respect, similar and united, and are likewise complete, uniform and uncompounded through their entire substance. For the superior divinities are always excelling in these respects, and the lesser ones being dependent upon the rule of those that are prior and never obtaining this rule for themselves, the whole are brought into one joint arrangement and one common activity, and are all of them, in a manner, in-

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*Plato has explained this very similarity in the *Timaios*. "When each of the stars necessary for the constitution of Time had obtained a motion adapted to its condition, and their bodies bound or encompassed by living chains, had become beings possessing life, and had learned their prescribed duty, they pursued their course."

†That the Supreme Being is One and Absolute is the leading principle of every ancient faith, however bizarre and polytheistic it may be esteemed. Amon, the tutelar god of Thebes in Egypt, who may have been in the mind of Abammon when writing, was denominated: "The One, the Maker of all that have being." The Mysteries of Ser-Apis were favored by Iamblichus, and the Rites of Mithras by Porphyry.

‡Plato makes use of an expression signifying "not subject to decay or disease;" Aristotle, "not being increased or changed."

corporeal and wholly divine. Hence, wherefore the divine ideal predominates in them, and implants through them all everywhere, the same One universal essence.

So, therefore, the gods that are visible in the sky, are likewise all of them in a certain sense, incorporeal.

THE GODS IN THE SKY NOT MALIGNANT

Thy next question raises a difficulty in another form: "How is it that some of these gods are givers of good and others bring evil?"

This conjecture is taken from the casters of nativities, but it falls short of actual fact in every particular. For they all are not only good, but in like manner, also the causes and authors of benefits, and they likewise all revolve (in their orbits) with reference simply to the One God, according to the beautiful and good alone. Nevertheless the bodies which are subject to them,* themselves possess extraordinary powers; some of these powers being firmly established in the divine bodies themselves; but others going forth from them into the productive principle of the world, even into the world itself, and likewise passing down in proper order through the whole realm of generation,† and extending without impediant even to incomplete races.

In respect, therefore, to the powers which inhere in the bodies of the divine ones in the sky, there is no doubt that they are all similar. Hence it is left for us that we shall discourse

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*These are the astral globes which these divinities, being themselves in reality spiritual essences, were supposed to encompass and permeate.

†In this sentence the feminine and masculine relation, as typifying the procedure of the divine operation, is very distinctly set forth. The *φύσις phusis* and *γενεσις genesis* actually signify as much. In this treatise, as in other philosophic works, *genesis* signifies the descending of the creative energy from the sempersistent world into the sphere and condition of created existence, and *phusis,* or nature, is the female or productive agency, by which the transition is accomplished. The sentence admits accordingly to be also rendered as follows: "Others go forth from them into the womb of the world (*Κοσμος*), even the world itself, and likewise descend in due order through the whole generative process, continuing, without hindrance, as far as the incomplete races."

upon those which have been sent down here, and which have become intermingled with the sphere of generated existence. They extend in the same way preservation of the universe, and encompass the whole realm of generated existence after the same manner. They are both impassive and unchangeable, although they are present in the changeable and passive. The realm of generated existence being of many kinds and constituted of things diverse in character, contends against the oneness and indivisible essence of the gods with its own contrary and factious nature, discordantly and factiously. But it admits the impassive essence after the passive manner; and in short it participates of them according to its peculiar nature and not according to their power. As, therefore, that which comes into existence partakes of real being, as by heredity, and the body receives the incorporeal essence after a corporeal manner, so likewise the natural and material bodies in the realm of generated existence, it may be, participate in a disorderly and discordant manner of the non-material and ætherial bodies, which are above the realms of nature and generated existence. They are absurd, therefore, who attribute color, figure and the sense of feeling to mental forms, because those that participate of them are of such a kind; and so are they also who impute malignity to the bodies in the sky because their participants are sometimes bad. For unless the one who is participating had some such aberration at the beginning, there would be no such communication. But if that which is imparted is received as being foreign and inimical, it may, perhaps, become as something different, and to those belonging about the earth, it is evil and disorderly. This participation, therefore, and the commingling of aura of the realm of matter with that of the non-material realm, becomes a cause of much essential diversity in the inferior races; and besides these, that which is given forth in one way, is received after another. Thus, for example, the aura of Kronos (Seb) is dense, but that of Arês (Mandu) is impulsive;* yet

*Abammon follows the Egyptian category and adopts the Grecian names for divinities supposed to be nearest in character and quality. In this description, Kronos or Saturn represents the centripetal and Arês or Mars the centrifugal force.

the passive generative receptacle in those belonging in the realm of matter receives the former according to its consolidation and coolness, but the latter according to the warmth beyond the usual condition. Hence do not corrupting influence and the disproportionateness come through the deviation of the recipients, which is productive of inharmoniousness, pertaining to the realm of matter and impressionable? Hence the feebleness incident to regions in the realm of matter and earthly existence, not being capable of the genuine power and absolutely pure life of the divine ones of the ætherial region, refers its own condition to the Primary Causes—just as though a person distempered in body and not able to endure the life-giving warmth of the Sun, should have the audacity to affirm from his own condition, the falsehood that the Sun is of no benefit to health or life.

Something of this kind, however, may be the case in the general order and constitution of the universe, as the same things may be the means of safety to the universe and to every one, through the completeness, both of the things that are possible and those by which they are possible, but are harmful to the imperfect through their specific lack of harmony. Likewise in the motion of the universe, the revolutions in like manner maintain order in every respect, but some one of the parts is injured now and then by another, as we see occurring in a dance.*

To repeat the statement once more, it is the natural tendency of partial and incomplete things to decompose and undergo change. It is not proper, however, to attribute this peculiarity to the universal and primary causes, either as being inherent in them or as extending from them into this lower region.

Hence, from considerations of such a nature, it is demonstrated that neither the gods (of the planets) in the sky themselves, nor their gifts, bring evil.

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*It would be easy to imagine this as happening in the case of the hundred and more asteroids, that exist in the space between the orbits of the planets Mars and Jupiter, or of the comets that so often come rushing through space.

THE GODS HAVE ONE COMMON ESSENCE

Come, then, let us dispose of that question also: "What is the bond of union that connects the divinities in the sky, that have bodies, with the gods that are unbodied?"

This also is clear from what has been said already. For though as being incorporeal, intelligent and united, they ride upon the celestial spheres, they have their origins in the realm of mind,* and comprehending their essential being as divine, they govern the whole sky by one infinite energy, and although present in the sky as existing separately, they conduct the perpetual revolutions by their solitary wills, and are themselves unmingled with sensation and coexist with the gods of the realm of Mind.

It is proper, nevertheless, to examine the present question thoroughly. I state the proposition accordingly, that the images of the gods which are visible (in the sky) are from the divine models in the realm of Mind, and are engendered around them;† and having come into existence they are established in these absolutely,‡ and being extended to them, they have the likeness which has been produced from them. They are likewise wrought into another arrangement after a different manner. They are held here in connection with those models in one stable union, and the divine spiritual forms, which are present with the visible bodies of the gods, exist separately before them, but their noetic models unmingled and super-celestial remain permanently by themselves, all as one in their everlasting exaltation.

There is, therefore, the common indissoluble bond with reference to spiritual energies, but there is one also in the common participations of forms, since nothing separates these, and there is nothing intervening between them. Besides, the non-material and incorporeal essence, being

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*See Chapter VIII.

†Damaskios remarks that "the Divine Intelligence which encompasses all things after the manner of models, brings them forth from itself as likenesses."

‡That is, all are brought back to their source and rooted in their cause.

neither parted by spaces nor by subject-bodies, nor marked off by delineations into separate parts, comes together at once, and coalesces into an absolute identity. The issuing forth of all from the One, the returning again into the One, and the absolute rule of the One in everything effect the communion of the gods themselves in the Cosmic world, with those that pre-exist in the realm of Mind.

Moreover, the conversion of the secondary to the superior spiritual beings and the bestowing of the same essence and power from the primary to the secondary gods, holds their association indissoluble in one. In regard to things of another quality, as for example, soul and body, and those of unlike kinds, such as material forms, and also of substances which are in some other way separated from each other, the natural union, which exists between them both, originates from the Powers above and is cast off in consequence of the limited periods of time. However far we may ascend in regard to the height and the unchangeable sameness of the divinities, who are first as to form and essence, and raise ourselves from imperfect beings to perfect, by this much the more do we find the union which is sempiternal, and likewise behold the self which is principle and dominant,* possessing diversity and multitude around itself and in itself.

Inasmuch as the gods are all arranged as absolutely one, the primary and secondary races, even the many that are self-existent with them, preside together over the universe as one, everything in them is one, and the first, the intermediate and lowest races coexist as the One itself. Hence, in respect to these, it is of no use to enquire whence the One is brought into reciprocal relations with them all, for the self-same essence that is indeed in them is the one of their own substance.†

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*In other words, this *atman,* or self, is at once all-receptive and all-procreative, as having the joint powers of procreation and production.

†We are thus brought to the central principle of the ancient philosophy and worship; that the many divinities are in essence the One Sole Deity, and comprised in the Paternal Cause of the Universe. The Orphic Carmen in the same way inculcated that all the gods and both the sexes are included in the same Zeus. They are attributes, or qualities, of the One, personalities rather than individuals.

The secondary races not only remain together in the unity of the primary divinities, but the primary gods bestow upon the secondary races the oneness from themselves, and they all maintain the common bond of an indissoluble relationship to one another.

From the same cause, moreover, the gods that are entirely incorporeal are united with the gods (in the sky) that have bodies and are perceptible to the senses. For the gods that are visible are really outside of bodies, and therefore are in the world of Mind; and those of the world of Mind, through their unconditioned unity, encompass the visible divinities within their own substance, and both are established by a common union and a single energy. In like manner, also, this is characteristic of the cause and arrangement of the gods, and for this reason this very oneness of them all extends from above to the very last in the order of divine beings. Suppose, however, that this seems to be a statement to be doubted, the contrary supposition, that there is nothing of the kind, would be matter of wonderment.

So much may be declared in regard to the bond which unites the gods, that are established in a manner perceptible to the senses, with the gods of the world of Mind.

OTHER MODES OF DISTINGUISHING

After this, however, thou takest up again the very questions in regard to which the things which have been stated already will suffice amply for a solution. Since, however, as the saying is, it is necessary to tell and examine often the things which are beautiful, we will not pass these matters by as having received sufficient answer, but by pounding away repeatedly with arguments we may perhaps get out of them all some complete and important benefit in true knowledge. For thou art still in doubt, as the question shows: "The gods that are visible (in the sky) being included in the same category with the invisible, what distinguishes the demons from the visible, and likewise the invisible gods?"

Beginning at this starting point, I will set forth the difference. It is because the gods in the sky are united with the

gods in the world of Mind, and have the same idea or principle of existence with them; but the demons are far distant from them in essence, and scarcely compare with them in any resemblance. On this account they are distinct from the visible divinities, while they differ from the invisible gods in regard to the difference of their peculiar invisibility. For the demons are indeed imperceptible to sight, and in no way to be apprehended by a sense; but the gods are beyond the scope of the knowledge and perception incident to the realm of matter. Because they are in these respects unknowable and invisible, they are so named, or it may be in a sense very different in respect to the demons that they are described as invisible. What, then, do the invisible gods have, so far as they are invisible, which is superior to the gods that are seen in the sky? Nothing at all. For the divine quality, whatever it may be, and whatever allotment it may have, possesses the same power and dominion over all subordinate things. Even if they were visible they would not be subordinate to the invisible demons, and though they were to belong to the Earth, they would reign over the demons of the air. For neither the place nor the part of the world that may receive it, makes any change in the Supreme authority of the gods; but the entire essence of the gods, indivisible and unchangeable, which all the inferior races in the order of nature revere in like manner, remains everywhere the same.

Setting out from the same point of beginning, we also find another difference between them. For the visible and invisible gods concentrate in themselves the whole government of existing affairs, both in regard to the sky and world, and in relation to the entire invisible forces of the universe. But those that are allotted to authority among the demons, extending it over certain prescribed regions of the world, govern these, and themselves likewise have an incomplete form of essence and power. They are even in some manner akin and inseparable from those that are governed by them.

The gods, however, even those that go upon bodies as their vehicles, are separated and diverse from these in all respects. Hence the supervising of the bodies brings no specific lessen-

ing of rank to those to whom the body is subject; it is encompassed by the superior essence, and is turned back to it, and is no obstacle to it. But on the other hand, the close affiliation to the generative nature and the imperfection ensuing by it, give the demons necessarily an inferior destiny. In short, the divine race is predominant and takes precedence in the general arrangement among existing things; but the demonian order is ministrant, receiving whatever directions the gods may give, and responding promptly by own effort, in regard to whatever the gods contemplate, will and command.

Hence the gods are freed from the forces which incline downward to the realm of generated existence, but the demons are not wholly purified from these.

So much, therefore, we have subjoined in regard to this solution of the problem, and we think that from the former and the present arguments the matter will become better known.

CLASSIFICATION REJECTED

For the reasons which we have before stated, the classification of passive and impassive which thou makest, should be rejected as not being suitable for any of the superior races, on account of the causes which we formerly mentioned. Indeed it deserves to be overturned, because it argues from the Sacred Dramas that "they are impressionable." What Holy Rite, and what act of worship performed according to the Sacerdotal Regulations, is accomplished through a passive condition, or effects any satisfying of passive conditions? Was it not ordained from the beginning, according to the ordinances* of the gods and likewise intelligently? The Rite both copies the order of the gods, both that of the gods of the world of Mind and that of the gods in the sky, and contains the eternal metres of things that are, and wonderful spectacles

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*The older laws of the Athenians were called *thesmá* as being ordained by the gods, or rather the priests. The laws of Drako were *thesmoi,* those of Solon *nomoi* or regulations.

which were sent down from the Creator (Demiurgus) and Father of All, by which also the things of Silence are represented by arcane symbols, the things without form are held firmly in forms, the things which are superior to any likeness are represented unshapen, and everything is accomplished by a sole Divine Cause, which is so far remote from passive conditions that no reasoning faculty can reach to it.

This fact, therefore, I suppose, becomes the cause why many turn away to the multitude of projects. For men who are unable to acquire the deeper knowledge of the reasonings themselves, yet who imagine themselves able, are entirely carried away by their own peculiar human emotions, and form their judgment of matters relating to the gods from things incident to themselves. Hence they err in two ways: because they fail of the true concept of divine things; and because when they miss these, they drag their notions of these down to the level of human emotions themselves.* Nevertheless, it ought not to be supposed that the things which are performed alike to gods and human beings,—such as acts of homage, salutations, offerings, first-fruits, are to be regarded as after the same plan of action in both cases; but that each is established apart from the other with regard to the distinction of being more honorable—the one venerated as being for the gods and the other held in low esteem as relating to human concerns. Thus is given a completeness to passive conditions, both of those doing homage and those to whom it is rendered, for they are human and of a corporeal nature; but honor is to be bestowed unstintingly upon the operation of the others, as being performed through unchanging admiration and a reverent condition of mind, because they are rendered to the gods.

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*Damaskios remarks, that "we discourse after the manner of men respecting principles that are extolled as divine."

V

THE SUPERIOR RACES AND THEIR MANIFESTATIONS

PART II

CHAPTER V

THE SUPERIOR RACES AND THEIR MANIFESTATIONS

DEMONS AND HALF-GODS DIVERSE IN ESSENCE

This it now becomes necessary to describe to thee: "in what a demon differs from a hero or half-god and a soul, whether in essence, in power, or in energy."

I say accordingly, that demons are produced by the generative and creative powers of the gods, in the furthest extreme of emanation and the last divisions: but that the heroes or half-gods have their origin by the forces of life in the gods; and that the superior and highest in rank of the souls are brought to completeness and distinguished from these forces.

The nature of the demons and half-gods being thus derived from different sources, their essence is of necessity different. Thus that of the demons is effective of purposes, bringing to maturity the natures about the world, and exercising guardianship individually over those coming into existence.* That of the heroes is life-sustaining, promotive of the reasoning faculty, and directive of souls.

The powers likewise may be defined accordingly. Those of

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*Plato—*Republic,* X, Ch. 15. "This is the beginning of another period for men of mortal race. The demon will not receive you as having been allotted to him, but you will choose the demon; the cause is in him who makes the choice."

the demons pertain to coming into existence and also to the oversight of the souls and of the connection of the souls with the bodies. It is also proper to assign to the heroes powers life-imparting, directive of human beings, and setting free from the nativity.

THE ENERGIES

It follows now that their energies should be explained. Those of the demons may be described as being employed around the world and as extending generally among the things accomplished by themselves; but those of the heroes not only as not extending so far, but as being engaged with the distribution of the souls. So, therefore these being explained, the Soul is next, and ranks as the end of the series of divine beings. Having received from these two races a specific allotment of powers, it both augments the apportionment by other more abundant additions from itself, and likewise projects from itself at one time various forms and principles of life which are entirely different, and at another time still others. Thus making use of different lives and ideals according to each region of the world, it is united with those that it likes, and draws away from those from which it may wish to be separate, becoming assimilated to all, and separated from them by otherness. In this way, choosing principles akin both to the things that are sempersistent and to those that come into existence in time, it allies itself to the gods by harmonies of essence and power other than those by which the demons and half-gods are likewise entwined with them. Though possessing in a less degree than they the everlasting condition of similar life and energy, nevertheless, through the good will of the gods and the luminance imparted by their light, it often goes higher and is exalted to a higher rank, even to that of angels. It, then, remains no longer in the limitations of the psychal condition, but is developed completely through its whole substance into an angelic soul and an uncontaminate life Hence, manifestly, the Soul seems to contain in itself manifold essences, different rational qualities, and all manner of idealities. If, however, we must

speak the honest truth, the contingency exists, that it is always limited in reference to one particular thing; yet being in communication with the Causes it is at different times allied to different ones.

So great, therefore, being the differences among them in all these respects, it is no longer worth while to dispute in regard to the particular thing which is the cause of difference among them. Whatsoever nature they every one have, by that they are to be distinguished from the others. So far also, as they form one common society, to such an extent their common quality may be contemplated; for in this way it will be possible to comprehend without mistake, and to define distinctly the view to be entertained of the whole subject.

EPIPHANIES OR "APPARITIONS"

Let us now proceed to the Epiphanies or apparitions (which are seen at the Initiations). What is the difference in them? For thou puttest the question: "What is the token (at the Sacred Rites) of the presence of a god, an angel or an archangel, or a demon, or of some archon, or a soul?"*

I will, therefore, in a single statement lay down the proposition that the apparitions are in accord with their essences, powers and energies. For such as they are as such do they manifest themselves to those who are making the invocations; and they not only exhibit energies and forms which are char-

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*Scutellius enumerates nine classes of spiritual beings, namely: 1. Invisible Gods; 2. Visible Gods of the Sky; 3. Archangels; 4. Angels; 5. Demons; 6. Leaders; 7. Princes; 8. Heroes or Demi-gods; 9. Souls. Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians enumerates the following: 1. Princes; 2. Authorities; 3. Kosmokrators or princes of the Cosmos; 4. Spiritual essences in the super-celestial spheres. Damaskios enumerates six orders in the Chaldæan Categories, as follows: 1. Gods that are purely mind; 2. The Gods subsisting before all subordinate dominion; 3. Rulers; 4. Archangels; 5. Divinities that are confined to no specific place or service; 6. Divinities or geniuses with specific duties.

acteristic of themselves, but they likewise display their own particular tokens. In order, however, to draw the distinctions minutely, this is the explanation: The spectral forms of the gods are uniform; those of the demons are diversified; those of the angels are more simple in appearance than those belonging to the demons, but inferior to those of the gods; those of the archangels approach nearer to the divine Causes; those of the archons—if those that have charge of the sublunary elements seem to thee to be the lords of the world*—will be diversified but arranged in proper order; but if they are princes of the region of Matter, they will not only be more diversified but much more imperfect than the others; and those of the souls will appear in every kind of style.

In the (Epoptic) Vision the figures of the gods shine brilliantly;† those of the archangels are awe-inspiring and yet gentle; those of the angels are milder; those of the demons are alarming. Those of the half-gods, although these are left out in your question, yet there should be an answer for the sake of the truth because they are more gentle than those of the demons. Those of the archons are terrifying to the Beholders,‡

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*These, the Kosmokrators, are supposed by Thomas Taylor to be the rulers of the planets. The Assyrians and Chaldæans enumerated nine distinct orders—three Triads of three classes each. The Archangels correspond to the seven Amshaspands of the Zoroastrian category; and the archons of the sphere of Matter appear to have been often regarded as evil potencies. The ancients, however, did not always distinguish good and evil quite as the moderns with their ethical standards.

†Proklos following Iamblichus gives this description: "In all the Perfective Rites and Mysteries, the gods project many shapes of themselves, and display many changing figures; there will be a formless luminance radiating from them; then again it will be represented in a human form, and again it will go into some different shape." Some of the figures were empousæ and not gods, and excited alarm; others were attractive, and others encouraged.

‡The "Beholders," *epoptæ* or seers, were the individuals engaged in being initiated, or "perfected." We have preserved this term uniformly to avoid confusing readers.

if they are the archons of the universe; and hurtful and distressing, if they are of the realm of Matter. The figures of the Souls are similar to those of the half-gods except that they are inferior to them.

Moreover, the figures of the gods in regard to size, aspect, external appearance and everything around them, are absolutely unchangeable. Those of the archangels are very near to those of the gods in these respects, but come short of being actually the same. Those of the angels are inferior to these, but are unchangeable. Those of the demons are seen in different shapes and appear great and small at different times; but the manifestations are the same. Those of the archons who are rulers are unchangeable, but the apparitions of those that belong to the realm of Matter are apt to change into innumerable forms. Those of the half-gods are like those of the demons, and those of the souls conform in no small degree to changeableness, peculiar to the demons.

Further still, to the gods there pertain order and tranquillity; and with the figures of the archangels there exists a dramatic representation of order and quietude. With the angels there is present the disposition for order and peacefulness, but they are not free from motion. The figures of the demons are accompanied by tumult and disorder. With those of the archons there are objects to be seen analogous to each class which we have already mentioned: those of the realm of Matter being borne along tumultuously. Those of the half-gods are constantly in motion and are never exempt from change, and those of the Souls resemble the figures of half-gods, but at the same time are inferior to them.

With these peculiarities there flashes out from the gods Beauty which seems inconceivable, holding the Beholders fixed with wonder, imparting to them an unutterable gladness, displaying itself to view with ineffable symmetry, and carrying off the palm from other forms of comeliness. The glorious views of the archangels have themselves very great beauty, but it is by no means ineffable and admirable as that of the gods. Those of the angels partake in a degree of the beauty which they receive from the archangels.

The spirits at the Autopsia, the demons and half-gods,* both of them possess beauty in defined forms; but that of the demons is set forth in ways that make their essence distinct, and that of the half-gods displays a manlike character. The figures of the archons are classified by the twofold distinction. For those of the one class display a beauty predominant and self-originated; and those of the other class exhibit an ingenious mock-representation of a beautiful shape The figures of the souls are themselves arranged in definite forms, but these are more diverse than is the case with the half-gods, being more particularly circumscribed and controlled by a single ideal.

If, however, it is necessary in regard to them all that they shall be defined by a common rule, I say that as every one of them all is constituted, and as it has its own peculiar nature, even so do they all participate of the Absolute Beauty according to the existing allotment.

MANIFESTATIONS AT THE RITES

Proceeding therefore to other peculiarities of the superior races, we will remark that in the Sacred Performances there is with the gods an incredible celerity, and although they themselves are immutable and steadfast, they shine out swifter than mind itself. But with the archangels the swift move-

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*The Greek term "autoptic spirits," meaning those which appear at the "Autopsia," or Perfective Rite. Mr. Robert Brown, Jr., ably describes it. The candidates, or Beholders, having passed the preliminary discipline as Mystæ, are ushered into the Sekos, or chamber of Initiation. "Here, deeply excited and agitated by all they have gone through, ready to believe anything and everything, in that state of abstinence, which is, or is supposed to be, most favorable to the reception of supernatural displays, with their minds more or less affected by drugs and their whole being permeated with the impression and expectation of a revelation of the more than mortal, they were allowed to see. This is the Autopsia, or Personal inspection, the Crown of Mysteries, the Etopteia, or Divine Beholding, which was used as a synonym to express the highest earthly happiness, and he who enjoyed it became an Epoptes, or Contemplator, beyond which this world could afford him nothing."—*Great Dionysiak Myth,* VI, ii, 3. Compare also *epistle of Paul to the Corinthians,* XII, 2-4.

ments are commingled in some way with the dramatic performances. Those of the angels, however, are connected with a certain moving impulse and take part no further in a similar manner in the Perfective Rite* by way of speaking.

With the demons there is a show of rapidness in the Performances which is more than genuine. But with the figures of the half-gods, there appears a certain grandness in the motions; nevertheless it is not possible to effect these things, which they desire at the Perfective Rite as quickly as it is for the demons. In the case of those of the archons, those of the former class possessing authority, exhibit performances that appear highly creditable; and those of the second class have more display, but fall short in regard to results at the end. The figures of the souls are seen to be incessantly in motion, but feebler than in the case of those of the half-gods.

In addition to these points, the magnitude of the apparitions may be considered. In the case of the gods it is displayed to such a degree as sometimes to hide from view the entire sky, the sun and the moon, and likewise to make it no longer possible for the earth to stand firm while they are making their descent.†

When archangels appear, there are certain regions of the

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*Greek, *Τό ἀποτελεστικόν,* to *apotelestikon,* the perfective rite. The Romans termed the ceremonies "Initiations," as signifying the beginning of a new life, while the Greeks regarded it as denoting a completing of the Herculean labors of the Soul. The services were conducted after the form of a dramatic representation, and Clement styled them accordingly, "the Drama of the Mysteries." The ancient Theatre took its rise from these rites, as the Modern Theatre had its origin in the Mystery-Plays of the Monks in the Middle Ages. The Athenian Theatre was a Temple of Bacchus.

†The *Chaldæan Oracles* describe these scenic displays in very similar terms:

"If thou invoked me often, thou wouldst behold what thou desirest:
For then the concave vault of heaven does not appear,
The stars shine not, the moonlight wastes away,
The earth no more stands still;
All things are to be seen by the flashes of the lightnings."

world set in motion, and a divided luminance goes in advance before them. But they themselves according to the magnitude of their dominion display also light in correspondence with its dimension. The angelic luminosity is very much less, and is likewise greatly divided. In the case of the demons themselves, it is still more diffused than with the angels, and their magnitude is observed to be not always equal. The manifestation of the half-gods is less than this, but it exhibits more of pride of condition. The figures of the archons that are rulers of pericosmic forms appear large and indeed of huge dimensions, but those that are distributed over the realm of Matter employ more ostentation and false pretending. Those of the souls do not all seem equal, and they appear smaller than the figures of the half-gods. In short, it is according to the magnitude of the powers in each of the Superior races, according to the vastness of the dominion through which they are extended and in which they exercise authority, and according to the due proportion itself, that the magnitude of the manifestations is graciously exhibited in every one of them.

After these explanations let us define the characteristics of these images thus individually manifest. In the autoptic visions of the gods, the most brilliant spectacles of reality itself are to be beheld. They not only shine steadily but they are plainly visible as if in organic shapes. The images of the archangels present themselves to view genuine and perfect. Those of the angels preserve the form itself, but they come short in the completeness of distinctive tokens. Those of the demons are scarcely perceptible, and those of the half-gods are still inferior. Those of the cosmic archons are clear, and those of the archons of the realm of Matter are indistinct, but both classes seem to be exercising authority. Those of the souls appear like mere shadows.

In like manner, let us explain also, in regard to the luminosity. The images of the gods glow with abundance of light, and those of the archangels are surpassingly luminous.*

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*The *Chaldæan Oracles* disapprove of invoking these manifestations. "Thou shalt not invoke the Autoptic Image of Being, for it is not proper for thee to see these things before the body is perfected, or initiated."

Those of the angels are resplendent with light, but the demons present the appearance of smouldering fire, and the half-gods a commingling from many sources. The cosmic archons are relatively more pure from such admixture, but those of the realm of Matter exhibit a mingling of dissimilar and incongruous elements. The Souls are more distinctly visible from many admixtures in the sphere of generated existence, the light being supplied only by partial gleams.

In the same manner we will speak further of the things which have been discussed. The Fire of the gods shines brilliantly an undivided flame without sound, and it fills all the depths of the world like a conflagration, but not after the manner of a worldly occurrence.* The fire of the archangel is unbroken, but there is to be seen around it a great mass going before it or following after it. The fire of the angels is disjoined, yet it appears in very perfect forms. That of the demons is not only circumscribed into still briefer dimensions, and may be explained in a word, but it is not worthy to be noticed by those who are contemplating spectacle of the superior beings. That of the half-gods contain after a manner the same peculiarities, but at the same time it falls short of an exact similarity to that of the demons. That of the archons of the higher class is observed to be more glowing; but in the case of those belonging to the realm of Matter, it is darker. That of the Souls themselves exhibits many divisions and various forms mingled together from many of the natures around the world.

To repeat: The fire of the gods is always stable to the view. That of the archangels is mild; that of the angels is in constant motion; that of the demons is unstable; that of the heroes is for the most part in swift motion; that of the archons of the first class is mild, but that of those of the lower order is full of

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*The divine essence was anciently described in every religion as fire, and so the "eternal fire" was preserved in temples and on altars, as its symbol. Hence, the *Chaldæan Oracle* commands: "When thou shalt behold the Very Holy Fire without form, shining in flashes down into the depths of the world, then listen to the Voice of the Fire." Zoroaster at the Altar and Moses on Mount Sinai (Deuteronomy IV, 4) are described as hearing the Voice of the Supreme Being from such a source.

fluctuation. That of the souls changes with innumerable motions.

THE SUPERIOR RACES AND MATTER

Nevertheless, that which operates to purify the souls (from impurity incident in the realm of generated existence) is complete in the gods, but is simply of an exalting character in the archangels. The angels only loosen the bonds which fasten them to the sphere of matter. Demons draw them into the realm of nature,* and the half-gods bring them down into the province of the operations of the senses. The archons either entrust them with the charge of things pertaining to the cosmic world, or with the dominion of those belonging to the realm of matter, as the case may be. Souls, when they appear to the Beholders, attract in some manner downward to the sphere of generated existence.

And, further, this fact is to be kept in view: that everything of the visible likeness that is pure and stable thou shouldst attribute to the Superior Races. Whatever of them is very brilliant and firmly fixed in itself, ascribe to the gods. Whatever is luminous and nevertheless exists as by something else than itself, impute to the archangels; and whatever remains in a different form assign to the angels. Whatever is borne along as by a breeze and is not stably fixed, but is permeated by alien natures, all which is conformable to the inferior orders, is to be credited to some foreign source.

This classification, however, may also be made according to the difference of the commingling. For with the demons emanations from the planetary worlds are mingled and are borne along unsteadily by the motion of the astral world. With the half-gods, groups of spirits belonging to the department of generated life are again mixed up around which they

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*Minutius Felix remarks that "the demons bear downward by heavy weight, and turn from God to material conditions." The *Chaldæan Oracle* also says: "When bewitching (magnetizing) souls they always draw them away from the Sacred Rites." Much that is considered spiritual, and even divine influence, is of this character.

are also themselves constantly in motion. The cosmic archons likewise remain exhibiting the cosmic character which they possess; but those archons that belong to the realm of matter are filled with exhalations of the material region. Souls are infected with extraordinary defilements and alien spirits. With these accompaniments each of these races exhibits itself at the epiphanies.

To thee it will be no unimportant evidence that on these occasions there is in the case of the gods a consuming of matter all at once as by lightning. With the archangels it is destroyed in a short time. In the case of the angels there is a loosening and leading away from it. With the demons there is an arranging of it in an orderly manner. With the half-gods it is to be observed that they become adapted to it in due measures and give careful attention to it ingeniously. The archons that rule the planetary worlds are placed with it as though they were superior, and so shine forth as from themselves; but those of the realm of matter exhibit themselves as entirely filled up from matter. As for the souls, those also, that are pure manifest themselves outside of matter, but those of the opposite character are encompassed by it.

BENEFITS DERIVED FROM INITIATION

Moreover, the benefits acquired from the manifestations, are neither all alike, nor do they have the same fruits.* The advent of the god imparts to us health of body, virtue of soul, purity of mind, and indeed, to speak to the point, the leading of everything in us upward to its own first principles. It not only takes away the cold and destructive quality in us, but it augments the vital warmth and makes it more potent and predominant. It likewise brings everything into accord with the soul and mind. The light not only shines in the mental constitution, but it also exhibits that which is not body as body to the eyes of the soul through those of the body.

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*The *Chaldæan Oracles* have this declaration: "From those descending from the Empyreal regions the soul obtains the soul-nourishing flower."

The coming of the archangels likewise brings the same benefits, but it does not give them at all times, nor to all persons, nor such as are sufficient, or complete, or that may not be taken away; nor does the light shine in a manner equal to what is beheld at the manifestations of the gods. The presence of the angels dispenses benefits as if making a distribution of them, and the energy through which it is manifested comes far short of including in itself a perfect light. That of the demons weighs down the body and chastens it with diseases, drags down the soul into the realm of nature, and also fails to remove from bodies the sensibility born with bodies, detains in this region those who were hastening toward the fire, and does not set free from the bonds of Fate. The appearing of the half-gods is similar in various respects to that of the demons, but it differs in this respect, that it arouses the individual to noble and important deeds. The display of the cosmic archons at the autopsia imparts advantages of a general character and everything pertaining to the business of life; and that of the archons of the realm of matter extends benefits incident to the sphere of matter, and such works as pertain to the earth. Still further, moreover, the Vision of the Souls that are uncontaminate and established in the order of angels is elevating in its influence and salutary to the soul. It likewise imparts a sacred hope and bestows those benefits to which a sacred hope aspires. But the Vision of Souls of a different quality produces a tendency downward into the sphere of generated existence, corrupts the fruits of hope, and fills the Beholders with Perturbations that nail them fast to corporeal conditions.

VI

THE ORDER EXHIBITED AT THE RITES

CHAPTER VI

THE ORDER EXHIBITED AT THE RITES

Besides, there takes place at the Autopsies an exhibition of the order which those that are beheld, carefully maintain, namely:

That of the gods, having gods or angels around them.

That of the archangels, having angels either that precede them, keep in line with them, or follow after; or else being accompanied by another company of angels acting as an escort.

That of the angels exhibiting the peculiar operations of the order to which they have attained.

That of the good demons presenting for contemplation their own works and the benefits which they bestow.

That of the avenging demons displaying the forms of vengeance.

That of other evil demons encompassed by hurtful, blood-sucking and fierce wild beasts.*

That of the archons (of the cosmos) exhibiting along with themselves certain regions of the universe.

That of the other class of archons attracting the disorder and discord of the realm of matter.

That of a soul that is entire and not held fast in a specific form; it is beheld around the whole cosmic region as a formless fire, indicative of the Soul of the World, entire, one, undivided and without form.

That of the purified soul; the glowing shape is seen, the

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*"Sometimes," says Potter, "terrible apparitions astonished the trembling spectators" at the Perfective Rites. This was the case everywhere. In the *Chaldæan Oracles* mention is made of these direful creatures. They are called "dogs of the earth." "Thy vessel (the body) the chthonian beasts shall make their home." This implies obsession and evil influences from the spiritual world.

fire pure and without mixture. Then are seen its innermost luminance, and the form pure and steady; and it follows after the upward leading guide rejoicing with hearty good will and itself by its operations showing its proper rank.

The soul, however, that bows, carries along with it the symbols of bonds and punishments, and is not only weighed down by groups of spirits belonging to the realm of matter, but it is also held fast by the anomalous disorders incident to that realm, and there are also seen demons of the generative order placing their authority directly before it.

In short all these races make their respective orders duly distinguishable, and they show at once the regions which have fallen to them, and the allotments in which they abide. Those that are of the air display aërial fire; the earthly ones a chthonian and darker light, and the celestials a more splendid luminance. All these races are distributed in these three regions (the earth, air and superior heaven) in the threefold order of beginning, intermediary and last; those of the gods displaying the highest and purest causes pertaining to this threefold order; those of the angels being reckoned from the archangels; those of the demons being manifest as attendant upon these and those of the half-gods in like manner ministrant—not indeed after the same services as the demons, but after other and different ways of their own. Those of the archons have the allotment which is set apart to them; to one class the superintendence of the cosmic world and to the other that of the realm of matter. Those of the souls are classed as the last of the superior races.

Hence they all indicate their places by themselves; the first classes having the first; the second class the second, and the third class the third, and the others are arranged as belonging to some of these.

OTHER PHENOMENA AT THE RITES

Meanwhile, the gods beam forth light to such a degree of thinness that the bodily eyes are not able to sustain it, but are affected in the same way that fishes are when they are drawn from a muddy and thick fluid into rare and transparent air.

For the men, the Beholders of the Divine Fire not being able to breathe because of the thinness of the fire, become enfeebled as they come to the sight, and are excluded from natural respiration. Archangels also give forth a luminant atmosphere which is not endurable for breathing; yet they neither shine with the same pure light, nor are they as overpowering as the gods their superiors. The presence of the angels makes the temperature of the air endurable, so that it is possible for the theurgic priests to approach them. In the case of the demons there is nothing to affect the air, and in consequence the atmosphere around them does not become more tenuous; a luminosity does not precede them, in which their form might become visible from being taken and fixed by the air, and there occurs no radiation around them. In the case of the half-gods, certain parts of the earth are moved as by an earthquake, and noises echo around; but the air does not become at all thinner, or unsuitable for the theurgic priests, so as to render it impossible for them to endure it. In regard to the archons, whether those of the cosmic worlds or those that belong to the realm of matter, an assemblage of many luminous apparitions, hard to endure, surrounds them; but there occurs no attenuation of the air, such as is incident to the supramundane region, or to the Zodiacal signs on high.* But with the manifestations of the souls the air is evidently affiliated more closely, and being united to them receives in itself their limitations.

ACQUIREMENTS FROM THE SUPERIOR RACES

Accordingly, at the last stage, when the gods appear, the dispositions of soul of those who are invoking them, realize a thorough removing of passive conditions and the transcendent perfection, and not only the energy superior in every respect, but they also participate in divine love and a tranquillity of mind, almost beyond estimation. When the archangels are beheld, these dispositions acquire a pure constancy of condition,

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*The Supreme elements, *ἄκρα στοιχεία,* are the signs of the zodiac, which constituted an important feature in theurgy as allied to astrology.

spiritual insight and stable power. At the coming of the angels into view, they receive an allotment of wisdom and truth, and likewise of pure excellence, sure knowledge and order in harmony with these bestowments. But when the demons are contemplated the tendencies take on eager desire incident to the sphere of generated nature, and likewise not only acquire zeal for the completing of the Performances according to allotment of such exercises. If there is a view of the half-gods, then they are not only borne away by other such impressions, but also share in many anxieties of a character relating to a communion of souls. But when the archons are brought within purview, then movements are set up in the soul, cosmic or such as pertain to the realm of matter, as the case may be. And with the visions of the souls, there are brought into activity the generative appetites and natural solicitude as regards the care of the bodies and such other matters as relate to these.

In connection with these things, the apparition of the gods imparts sincerity and power, and likewise success in undertakings, and also gifts the greatest benefits; and at the appearing of the others everything is bestowed abundantly as it may be consistent with the rank of the several orders. For example that of the archangels, gives the perception of what is true, not simply in regard to all things collectively but definitely in relation to specific matters, and this not at all times but occasionally—not indefinitely to all or everywhere, but singly in a particular manner or to some special purposes. In short it does not confer power in like manner neither upon all, nor at all times, nor everywhere, but only sometimes and in some particular way. At the appearing of the angels, there are still narrower limitations than these in the circuit in the bestowing of benefits. The coming of the demons into view does not impart gifts good to the soul but either those of the body or which relate to the body. These they dispense wherever the order of the universe permits. According to the same conditions, the presence of the half-gods imparts benefits of the second and third order, aiming to acquire supervision of the entire polity of souls, but those of the earth and those of

the cosmic realm. At the manifestation of the archons, the cosmic and the other class, the former confer blessings of a cosmic nature and those of this life; but those of the inferior rank bring out not a few advantages incident to the realm of matter, they exhibit to the Beholders things which contribute to the welfare of human life.

Thus we have set forth particularly the boons received from these superior races according to the respective order of every one, and have likewise made a complete answer to what thou hast asked in regard to matters of importance in relation to their appearings to view. So much, then, let us set forth respecting these subjects.

BOASTFUL SPEECH AND DECEPTIVE IMAGES

The matter, however, which thou hast brought to us for a decisive solution respecting these superior races, whether as thy own opinion or whether as what thou hast heard from others, is neither correct nor rightly expressed. Thou sayest: "It is a common thing for the gods and demons alike, and with all the Superior races, to speak boastfully, and to project an unreal image into view."

Such is not the fact as thou supposest. For a god, an angel, and a good demon (when they appear at the Rites) give instruction freely to human beings, in regard to their own essence, but never in addition, make use in their teachings, of any expression greater than their transcendent power or inherent good qualities. For truth is essentially coëxistent with the gods as light is coëxistent with the Sun. At the same time we affirm that a God is in no want of excellence or any virtue which can be added to him through words. Besides the angels and demons always receive truth beforehand from the gods;* hence they never say anything else than this. Being every one of them perfect in their essence, it is not possible to add anything more to it by praising.

When, therefore, does the untruthful act of "speaking

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*Damaskios also declares that "a general distribution takes place from the One Origin of all things, and Plato calls this, the Truth."

boastfully'' mentioned by thee, take place? When there occurs some errancy in the theurgic technique, and the images which ought to be at the Autopsia are not, but others of a different kind are encountered, then the inferior races assume the guise of the more venerable orders, and pretend to be the very ones which they are counterfeiting;* and in such cases they abandon themselves to boastful speeches and pretensions of power which they do not possess. For I think that if anything spurious grows out like an excrescence from the first beginning, there will a great mass of falsehood flow forth from the perversion. It is necessary, therefore, for the priests to learn this thoroughly from the entire arrangement among the apparitions, and being on their guard against this, they can detect and reject the misleading assumptions of these pretenders as not being spirits that are good and true.

It is not proper in the faithful judging of things to bring forward conspicuously the errors. In the case of other sciences or arts we do not pass judgment from the failures that may have occurred in them. Things, therefore, which through inexpertness in evocation are hardly ever performed quite successfully in ten thousand representations thou shouldst not characterize from the untoward incidents, but shouldest instead bring to notice something different in respect to them. For though the performances at the self-revealing display† are such failures as thou sayest, boastful and false, those of the true adepts around the Fire are both genuine and true. For as in regard to everything else, the ruling powers begin first by themselves and furnish to themselves that which they bestow to others—as for example, in essence, in life, in action—so also supplying the truth abundantly to all beings, they are true first of all in respect to themselves and

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*Emanuel Swedenborg, in his Memoirs and Spiritual Diary, describes spirits of this character.

†Greek, *ἀντοφανες δείξιως.* Perhaps this refers to the fact also that at the final vision witnessed at the Perfective Rite, or Autopsia, the Beholder was revealed to himself in the impression which it gave him. Certainly Plato and Alkibiades regarded it with different sentiments.

at the very outset show their own essence to the Beholders. Hence, likewise, they exhibit the Autoptic fire to the theurgic priests. For it is not the operation of heat to freeze, nor of light to make dark or to hide anything from view, nor in anything else the function of which is to accomplish a particular thing, is there the power to perform some contrary operation at the same time. But on the other hand those that are not of that nature and are contrary to them in essence are able to receive these contrary impulses, or are naturally disposed to fall into evil.

We say the same things now in regard to phantasms, or apparitions.* For if these are not themselves genuine, but others of the kind are so, that really exist, they certainly will not be among the self-revealing spirits, but are of the kind that display themselves ostentatiously as genuine. These participate in deception and falsehood after the manner of the forms that appear in mirrors; and they thus attract the understanding to no good purpose, in regard to matters which never will be true of the superior races but will be among fraudulent deceptions. For the counterfeit of that which really is, and that also which resembles it faintly, as well as that which has become a source of deception, are characteristic of the races that are genuine and distinct to the view. On the other hand the gods and those that come after the gods reveal true likenesses of themselves, but never project apparitions such as are formed in water or in mirrors. Why should they exhibit these phantasms? Would it be to bring evidence of their own essence and power?

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*Professor Taylor Lewis defines *φαντασμα* (phantasma) as signifying an apparition. Chrysippos, the philosopher, gives the following meanings: *φαντασια, phantasia,* imagination which leads to contemplation of the Cause or origin; *φανταστον, phantaston,* something to impress the imagination; *φανταστικόν, phantastikon,* a fancy or vain impulse from the mind proceeding from nothing truly imaginable; *φαντασμα, phantasma,* a phantom to which we are drawn by fanciful attraction. Liddell and Scott would define a *phantasia* as an opinion presented from sensation; *phantaston,* as something leading to such opinion; *phantastikon,* as the faculty of such presentation; and *phantasma,* as an image presented to the mind by an object.

On the contrary these things are not at all necessary. They become a source of error and deception to those who believe, and they draw away the Beholders from the genuine knowledge of the gods. What useful thing do they bestow on those who are contemplating these things in the epoptic vision? What profit can be derived from that which is false? Yet unless divinity has this nature will it project a phantasm from itself? How possibly can a race that is stable and firmly established in itself and that is the source of essence and that which is genuine, create in an alien seat, a deceptive counterfeit from itself? By no means, certainly, does a god either transform himself into phantasms or project them from himself into other things, but he causes to shine forth from himself true intuitions in the true moral nature of the souls. According to these facts, they also who accompany the gods are zealous in regard to the genuineness of the gods that appear at the Autopsias.

Next, however, thou affirmest that it is "a common thing for the gods and demons and other races to make likenesses and speak boastfully of themselves." Such a mode of speaking confounds all the races of superior beings with each other, and leaves no difference between one and another. For in this view of the matter all qualities will be common with them and nothing that is choice will be conceded to the exalted ones. It is more just, therefore, to ask by way of denial: "in what way, then, will the race of gods be superior to that of the demons?" But the fact is, that these races have no common plane: it is not imaginable, and it is not proper to argue from the last and lowest races and from the false steps among the last races, in regard to the first orders and the genuine impressions seen of them. Any one thus thinking in regard to these matters will come close to what is right, and will become acceptable to the gods.

BECOMING AT ONE WITH DEITY

Thou also affirmest that "ignorance and delusion in respect to the gods is irreligiousness and impiety," and submittest the true doctrine in relation to these things. In all this there is

no conflict of sentiment, but it is confessed by all alike. For who will not agree that the superior knowledge which is possessed of real being is most closely affiliated to the gods, but that the condition of not knowing falls infinitely far away from the divine causes of true ideals, sinking down to non-being? As, however, there has not enough been said upon this matter, I will add what is wanting; and because thy statement is made in a philosophic and logical manner rather than according to the working technique of the priests, I think it necessary to say something of a more theurgic character in regard to these matters.

Be it so that "not-knowing and delusion are discord and impiety." It does not follow on this account that the offerings and invocations which are made particularly to the gods, and also the Divine Performances are thereby made fallacies. For it is not the concept that unites the theurgic priests to the gods: else what is there to hinder those who pursue philosophic speculation contemplatively, from having the theurgic union to the gods? Now, however, in actual truth, this is not the case. On the other hand, it is the complete fulfilling of the arcane performances, the carrying of them through in a manner worthy of the gods and surpassing all conception, and likewise the power of the voiceless symbols which are perceived by the gods alone, that establish the Theurgic Union. Hence we do not effect these things by thinking.*

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*Here Abammon makes a new departure in the New Platonic philosophy. Plotinos and Porphyry had taught a system of doctrine analogous to the later Persian scheme, with the Absolute One at the summit, from whom proceeded by emanation, the Over-Mind, the Universal Soul, and Nature. To this Absolute, there might, by philosophic discipline, contemplation and ecstasy, be attained for brief periods, the enosis or intimate union. Iamblichos, however, seems to discard this doctrine with its theory of impassiveness, and to make theurgic or sacerdotal virtues the condition of excellence by which the divine part of the Soul exalts itself even above the Over-Mind, and becomes at one with the Absolute. Hence he inculcated the utility of religious rites and initiations as explained in the reply of Abammon. He was followed in this path by Eunapios, Syrianos and by Proklos, the great light of the later philosophy.

For thus the spiritual energy will be of these things, and imparted from ourselves; neither of which suppositions is true. For even when we are not revolving these things in mind the sacred emblems themselves are accomplishing their own work, and the ineffable power of the gods to whom these emblems belong, recognizes of itself its own likenesses. This, however, is not from having been aroused by our intelligence; for it is not in the nature of things that those that encompass should be set in motion by those that are encompassed, nor things that are perfect by those that are imperfect, nor wholes by parts. Hence, the divine causes are not called forth beforehand into operation by our acts of thinking; nevertheless it is necessary to acknowledge these and also all the best conditions of the soul, and the purity pertaining to us as certain joint causes before existing. Yet the things which arouse the divine will as by authority are the divine countersigns themselves. Thus the activities of the gods are set in motion by themselves and do not receive into themselves from an inferior source any principle of their characteristic energy.

I have prolonged this discussion to this extent in order that thou mayst not be led to think that all command of the operation in the Theurgic Rites is from us, and that thou mayst not suppose that the genuineness of these performances is actually regulated by conditions in our acts of thinking, or that they are made false by deception. For although we may know the peculiarities which are incident to each race of the superior beings, we may fail to hit upon the truth in regard to their operations. Yet without this knowledge the mystic union never takes place; nevertheless the union and the knowledge are by no means the same thing. So, the divine purity is in no sense by means of the right knowledge, as that of the body is not through health; but on the other hand it is more completely one and more pure than knowledge. Nothing, therefore, of such qualities in us, or anything whatever that is human, helps in any way to the accomplishment of the divine exercises.

Accept this accordingly which indeed is said in addition but is a sufficient reply to thy whole conception in regard to technique of Theurgy. But those statements of thine have the

same force with these in which thou acknowledgest that "the superior knowledge in respect to the gods is holy and helpful," and callest the not-knowing in respect to things revered and beautiful "Darkness," but the knowing of them, "Light"—adding that "the former condition will cause human beings to be beset with every form of evil through ignorance and restlessness, and the other will be the source of everything beneficial." For all these things tend in the same direction with those which have been mentioned, and obtain a fitting notice with them. It is necessary, therefore, to pass them by, and to proceed with the inquiries respecting the Oracular Art, in order to resolve them.

VII

ORIGIN OF THE ART OF DIVINATION.

PART III

CHAPTER VII

ORIGIN OF THE ART OF DIVINATION.

First, then, thou askest that it shall be explained to thee in detail what it is that takes place in the prognosticating of the future. It is impossible to set forth at once what thou art trying to learn. For according to the gist of the question, thou imaginest something like this of the art of prognosticating: as that it is generated, and something existing in the realm of nature. But it is not one of the things that are generated, nor what a certain natural mutation accomplishes, nor some ingenious product which has been invented for useful purposes in every-day life—nor, in short, is it a human accomplishment at all, but divine, and beyond the realm of nature; and having been sent down from the heaven above, unbegotten and eternal, it naturally takes the first place.

The chief remedy for all doubts of such a kind is this: to know the origin of the Divining Art, that it is neither set in motion from bodies nor from the conditions incident to bodies, nor from a peculiar nature and the faculties incident to the nature, nor from human preparation or experience pertaining to it; but on the other hand, not from any skill acquired externally in relation to some part of which may be attempted in

every-day life. Its entire validity pertains to the gods, and is conferred by the gods. It is perfected by the divine Performances and symbols, and there are likewise divine spectacles and learned theorems. All other things are subject as instrumentalities for the gift of foreknowledge which has been transmitted from the gods. These include both such as relate to our soul and body and such as are inherent in the nature of everything or in the individual natures of every one. Some things, however, are subordinate beforehand, as being in the realm of Matter; such, for example, as places, or other things of a like character.

If, however, any one thinking that he is saying something erudite, shall refuse to consider the primary causes,* but shall attribute the art and faculty of divining to operations of an inferior character, such as to the activities of bodies, or changes of conditions, or to different movements or operations of human life, or to reasons of a psychic or physical nature; or if he shall argue from the correspondence of these things to others as being causes, presuming that he is setting forth what is true, he has gone entirely wrong.† On the contrary,

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*The Causes are to be understood to be divine beings. Plato and the Stoic philosophers regarded the art or faculty of divination as incited by a divine rapture or enthusiasm, and an imparting of divine knowledge to human beings. They also believed that there were divine dreams. Xenophanes, however, was a disbeliever, and Pythagoras rejected all forms of divination by sacrifices. Strato taught that the noëtic faculties are active in sleep. Plutarch explains that when the imaginative part of the soul and the divine efflux are in accord, there is a mantic inspiration. The body, he insists, is sometimes naturally endued with the faculty of divining; and in other cases, this faculty may be set in operation by external and artificial means.

Abammon, as will be noted, denies that the sex of the seer or ecstatic is an essential in the technique of divination. The oracle at Delphi was served by virgin attendants, and the shrines in other places by persons of some particular age, and in a peculiar state of alienation produced by fasting, mesmeric applications, anæsthesia or other artificial means.

†Aristotle imputed the divining faculty to a melancholic temperament; others to an inhaling of certain vapors or gases, and others to a variety of causes. Abammon in subsequent chapters treats of these. Plato describes priests skilled in divining as "the interpreters of the divinity to men."

the one right goal, and the one principle in relation to all these matters, will be found to be: that in no case do we derive the divination of the future from any of those things that have no foreknowledge in themselves, but that we shall contemplate the mantic power which is apportioned over all the world and to all the natures distributed therein from the gods who possess in themselves the entire compass of the knowledge of the things that have a being. For such a cause is not only primal, and, in the fullest sense, universal, but it also contains in itself primarily whatever it imparts to those that participate of it; and it especially bestows the true knowledge which the divining art requires. It likewise comprehends beforehand the essence and cause of the things about to take place, from which, of necessity, the attaining of foreknowledge comes unceasingly.

Let such, therefore, be the principle generally, not only in relation to all divining from which it is practicable to find out by the mode of the superior knowing all the forms of it, but let us also now take it in turn, following out the questions which thou hast proposed.

DIVINATION BY DREAMS.

In regard to divining in sleep thou remarkest as follows: "When we are asleep we often come, through dreams, to a perception of things that are about to occur. We are not in an ecstasy, full of commotion, for the body lies at rest; yet we do not ourselves apprehend these things as clearly as when we are awake."*

These things of which thou speakest are likely to take place in human dreams and in those set in motion by the soul or by our own thoughts, or by discourse, or such things as arise from

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*We are reminded of Campbell's verse:

"Coming events cast their shadows before." The person whose faculties are acute thus perceives them. Plutarch defines the matter as follows: "The divining faculty when it has drawn itself farthest from the present, touches on that which is to come; and it withdraws itself from this by a certain disposition of body, by which that state is produced which we call Inspiration or Enthusiasm."

phantasies or daily cares. These are sometimes true and sometimes false; they sometimes hit upon actual fact, but they go, many times, wide of the mark.

The dreams, however, which are termed "God-sent," do not have their origin in the way which thou describest. On the contrary, either when sleep is leaving us and we are beginning to awake, it happens that we hear a brief expression in regard to things to be done; or it may be that the voices are heard during the period between being awake and asleep, or when we have become entirely awake. Sometimes, also, an invisible and unbodied spirit encompasses the recumbent persons in a circle, so as not to come to the sight of the individual, but to be present in another joint sensation and understanding. It makes a rustling sound when thus coming in, and also diffuses itself in every direction, without producing any sense of contact; and it likewise accomplishes wonderful results in setting free from ill conditions of the soul and also of the body. At other times, however, a light beaming forth bright and soft, the sight of the eyes is not only held fast, but it remains so even when they had been wide open before. But the other senses continue awake, and are jointly conscious to a certain degree as to how the gods are visible in the light. Hence the individuals both hear what they say, and, following with the thought, know what they do. Of course, this is perceived more perfectly when the eyes are looking attentively, and the mind, being in full vigor, understands the things which are performed, and the movement of the Beholders is likewise in harmony.* These, therefore, being so many and so different, are in nothing like human dreams. On the contrary, not only are the peculiar wakeful condition, the holding of the sight, the seizure resembling torpor (catalepsis), the condition between sleep and awake, and the recent awaking or entire wakefulness, all of them divine, and accordant with the receiv-

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*This is similar in many respects to the vision of the prophet Balaam (*Numbers,* XXIV, 15, 16): "Balaam the son of Beor saith—the man beholding what is good and true, saith: Hearing the oracular utterances of God, apprehending superior knowledge from the Most High—Beholding the vision of God in sleep, having his eyes unsealed."

ing of the gods, but they are actually sent from the gods themselves, and a part of the divine manifestations precedes them, after the manner of such things.

Banish, then, from the divine dreams in which particularly there is divination, all notion that "we are asleep" in any sense whatever, and also the statement that "we do not clearly apprehend the meaning," as applying to those who behold the divine apparitions. For not only is the presence of the gods manifest in a degree by no means inferior to those who understand such things, but if we must tell the truth, it is necessarily more exact and distinct, and effects a more perfect consciousness in the former case than in the latter. Some, however, who do not take cognizance of these proofs of dreams which are truly oracular, but who think that they are in some way common with those that are merely human, fall rarely, and by accident, upon those in which there is a foreknowing of the future. Hence they doubt whether there are any dreams that contain truth in any degree. Indeed, this, it seems to me, disquiets thee because of not knowing their genuine tokens. But it is necessary that thou shouldst prefer the true meaning of dreams before thy own notions, and follow out the whole argument in regard to divination during sleep.

DIVINATION AND HEALING POWER.

They (the ancient sages to whom we have referred) likewise affirm the following things:

The soul, having a twofold life—the one along with the body, and the other separate from everything corporeal—we, in the case of the other mode of living, when we are awake, make use of many things pertaining to the life belonging with the body, except we, after a manner, detach ourselves from it in every respect by pure principles of thought and understanding. In sleep, however, we are completely set free as from fetters lying by us, and bring into activity the life which is separate from the sphere of generated existence. Hence, therefore, this form or ideal of life, whether it is spiritual*

*Greek, *νοερός (noeros)*, the pure reason; spiritual; from *νοός (noos)*, or Mind. It is the term usually rendered so in this treatise.

or divine, which is the same, or only one existing individually by itself, is awakened in us and puts forth its energy according to its own nature.

DISTINCT PROVINCES OF THE MIND AND SOUL.

Since, therefore, the mind contemplates the things that have real being, but the soul encompasses in itself the principles of all things that exist in the sphere of generated existence, it follows, of course, that, answering to the cause which comprehends future events, it prognosticates them, as arranged by their antecedent principles. Besides, however, when it joins together the divided sections of life and spiritual energy in the wholes (divine essences) from which they were taken, it creates a more perfect art of divining than this. For it is then filled from the wholes with every kind of knowledge, and thus most frequently attains to true conception in regard to the events which are taking place in the world. Nevertheless, when it is united to the gods through such liberated energy, it receives on the instant abundances of perceptions absolutely genuine, from which it gives forth the true oracular solution of divine dreams, and thenceforth establishes the absolutely genuine principles of knowledge. If, on the other hand, the soul interblends its spiritual and divine nature with the superior beings, its mental images will then be more pure and unalloyed, whether in respect to the gods or in relation to beings essentially incorporeal; or, to speak in simple terms, in respect to whatsoever contributes to the truth, that which relates to the world of mind. If, however, it exalts the notions of things pertaining to the world of creation to the gods, their causes, it receives from them, in addition, a power and a capacity of knowing which reasons intelligently both of things that were and things that will be.* It not only takes a view of every period of time, and examines events that are to take place in the period, but it likewise participates in the arranging, management and correcting of them. It not only heals

*Nothing resembles death more than sleep," says Xenophon. "In sleep the soul reveals her divine quality, and being then set free from the body she beholds the future."

diseased bodies,* but also restores to order many things among men which were discordant and disorderly. It also gives forth discoveries of arts, proper regulations for the administering of law, and institutions of customs. Thus, in the temples of Asklêpios, not only are diseases brought to an end by dreams of divine origin, but through manifestations by night the medical art is combined with the sacred visions.†

The entire army of Alexander was saved when in imminent danger of being destroyed in the night, Dionysos (Bacchus) appearing in a dream and indicating the way to be delivered from desperate calamities.‡ Aphutis, likewise, when it was besieged by King Lysander, was saved through dreams sent from Amun; he withdrawing his troops at the shortest notice and raising the siege without delay.§

Yet why is it necessary to refer specifically to events which occur daily, and exhibit an energy superior to speech? These

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*Physicians and others having the care of the sick have been indebted to dreams for the discovery of many remedies. Such is the testimony of Cicero, Diodoros, Plutarch and others. Intuitive suggestion also prompts to the employing of the proper remedial measures.

†Asklepios or Æsculpius, the patron god of the medical art, was called Oneiropompos or sender of dreams. There were sleep-houses at his various temples, in which "incubation" or mesmerism was employed. The dreams which were thus procured were interpreted by the prophets or mantic priests, and the remedies suggested if found valuable became a part of the pharmacopœia. The names of Cheiron, Jason, Medeia, seem to refer to this practice. Aristeides, in the reign of the Antonines, gives a very full account of this matter.

‡Plutarch and Arrian state that when Alexander on his return from India passed through Gedrosia, his army suffered from famine and disease. The mortality was prodigious and it required all the energy of the king to bring forward the survivors out of the trackless desert. We have no account of the interposition of the divinity, but, after arriving in Karamania, an orgy or festival of seven days was celebrated in his honor.

§Aphutis or Aphytis was a city of the peninsula of Pallene or Phlegra on the gulf of Saloniki. Pausanias and Plutarch tell the story that Lysander, the King of Sparta, was warned by a dream to abandon his purpose of investing the city and a temple to the god Amun was built and dedicated.

things, therefore, which have been set forth in relation to divination from the gods during sleep, both as to what it is and the benefit which it affords to human beings, are certainly enough.

TOKENS OF GENUINE POSSESSION.

And then thou affirmest as follows: "In like manner, many also come to a perception of the future through enthusiastic rapture and a divine impulse, when at the same time so thoroughly awake as to have the senses in full activity. Nevertheless, they by no means follow the matter closely, or at least they do not attend to it as closely as when in their ordinary condition."

Right here I wish to show the tokens in these occurrences of those who are really possessed by the gods. For they have either placed their whole life at the disposal as a vehicle or organ for the inspiring gods, or they exchange the human for the divine life, or else they carry on their own life in reference to the divinity. They are not acting by sense, nor are they watchful as those whose senses are aroused to greater acuteness, nor do they attempt the study of the future, nor are they moved as those who are active from impulse. On the other hand, they do not understand themselves, either as they were formerly or in any other way; nor, in short, do they exercise their own intelligence for themselves, nor do they put forth any superior knowledge of their own.

The chief token may be adduced as follows: Many, through the divine afflatus, are not burned when brought to the fire, nor when the fire touches them. Many, also, who are burned, do not perceive it, because in this case they are not living the life of an animal. Some, also, who are pierced with spits do not feel it; and others who have been struck on the shoulders with axes, and others still whose arms are cut with knives,* do not

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*This is probably an allusion to the mutilations practiced at Rites like the orgies of the Great Mother. Similar suspensions of sensibility are reported in cases of burning alive and the tortures inflicted upon religious devotees. The enthusiasm or mental ecstasy overcomes the corporeal sensation.

mind* it at all. Indeed, their performances are not at all usual with human beings. For to those who are divinely possessed inaccessible places become accessible: they are thrown into the fire; they go through fire; they pass through rivers like the holy maids in Kastabalis.† From these examples it is shown that they who are enthusiasts do not have any thought of themselves, and that they do not live a human or an animal life so far as relates to sense or natural impulse, but that they exchange it for another more divine life by which they are inspired and by which they are held fast.

OTHER TOKENS—THE BODY LIFTED INTO THE AIR.

There are truly many forms of divine possession, and the divine inbreathing is set in motion in many ways. Hence, accordingly, there are many different signs of it. For on the one hand the gods by whom we are inspired are different, and communicate a different inspiration; and on the other hand, the mode of the divine transports being changed, it occasions another form of divine impulse. For either the divinity possesses us, or we our entire selves become the god's own, or we are active in common with him. Sometimes we share the ultimate or last power of the divinity, at another time the intermediate, and sometimes the first. At one time there is a bare participation of these raptures; at another there is also communion; and sometimes, again, there is a complete union. Either the soul alone enjoys, or it has it with the body, or else the whole living individual shares it in common.

From these diversities it follows that the distinctive signs denoting those who are inspired are of many kinds. Not only among them are the motions of the body and of specific parts, but likewise its perfect repose, and also harmonious orders and dances and musical voices, or the contraries of these. The

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*Greek, *Παρακολουθέω* to follow a subject. It implies an understanding, together with a fixing of the attention till external consciousness is lost sight of.

†Kastabalis was a city in Kappadokia. In it was a temple of Artemis or Anahita, whose priestesses or holy maids, it was affirmed, walked with bare feet upon the snow and upon burning coals without harm.

body also is seen lifted up, or increased in size, or borne along raised up in the air,* or there appear occurrences in relation to it the contrary of these. There is likewise to be observed an evenness of voice according to extent, or with many deviations with intervals of silence and irregularities. Again, sometimes, the sounds are augmented or relaxed after the rules of music, and sometimes after another manner.

DESCENT OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT AND FIRE.

The principal thing in the evoking of a spirit is that the spirit is seen coming down and entering into an individual, also its importance and kind, and he is mystically persuaded and governed by it. The form of fire is seen by the recipient before the receiving of the spirit, and sometimes, either when the god is descending or when he is withdrawing himself, it becomes visible to all the Beholders.† From this manifestation the sign of the god which is the most genuine, the most potent, and most perfectly ordered, becomes known to a certainty; and it is not only proper to proclaim what is true in

*M. Eugene Salverte in his work on the *"Philosophy of Magic"* remarks that in spite of their master's assertions to the contrary, "the enthusiastic disciples of Iamblichos affirmed that when he prayed he was raised to the height of ten cubits from the ground; and dupes to the same metaphor, although Christians, have had the simplicity to attribute a similar miracle to St. Clare and St. Francis of Assisi."

Calmet mentions "several instances of persons full of religion and piety, who, in the fervor of their visions, have been taken up into the air and remained there some time." He adds that he personally knew a man to whom this occurred. Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, it is said, "was raised up from the ground to the height of two feet, while his body shone like light." Savonarola, who was burned at the stake, one person declares, was seen to remain suspended at a considerable height from the floor of his dungeon. Superintendent Moeller of Freiburg testified that Anna Maria Fleischer was "raised in bed, with her whole body, head and feet to the height of nine ells and a half, so that it appeared as if she would have flown through the windows."

If the polarity of the body can be changed by the will, this would be a physical possibility.

†This description presents a striking analogy to that given by John the Baptist in the Gospels, "He shall baptize or envelop you in a holy spirit and fire." (The words, "and fire," are interpolated.) "I have beheld the holy spirit descending as a dove from the sky, and it remained upon him."

respect to certain matters, but also to exhibit the power or to complete the rite with the adepts. But they who, without witnessing these holy spectacles at the Sacred Rites, effect the conjuring of the spirits in some invisible manner, grope their way as in the dark, and know nothing of what they are doing, except some very small signs which are manifested through the body of the person who is divinely inspired and some other things which are plainly to be seen; and they are likewise ignorant of everything of divine inbreathing which is veiled in invisibility.

But to come back from this digression. If the presence of the fire of the gods and an ineffable form of light from without shall permeate the individual who is under control, fill him completely, have absolute dominion over him, and encompass him on all sides so that he can put forth no energy of his own, what sense or mental effort or purpose of his own can he have who receives the divine fire? Or what impulse merely human can then insinuate itself, or what human reception of passion or ecstasy or turning aside of imagination, or anything else of the kind, such as the many conceive of, may then take place?

Let such as these, then, be the divine tokens of genuine inspiration from the gods, which any one, keeping in mind, will not swerve from the right knowledge in regard to it.

ENTHUSIASM OR DIVINE INSPIRATION.

Nevertheless, it is not enough to learn these things alone, nor may any one who knows only these things become perfect in divine overknowledge. On the other hand, it is necessary to know also what enthusiasm or divine possession really is and how it is developed. The conjecture that it is a carrying away of the understanding by a demonian afflatus is utterly false.* The human understanding, if it is truly thus possessed, is not carried away. Not from demons, but from gods, comes inspiration. Really, on the other hand, it is not simply an ecstatic rapture or trance, but, on the contrary, an exaltation and passing to the superior condition; whereas mental

*Theophrastos, who became the teacher in the Lyceum at Athens, after Aristotle, regarded enthusiasm as a disease.

distraction and ecstasy indicate a general overturning to the worse. Hence, a person declaring this may speak of the results in respect to the entheast individuals and yet give no instruction in regard to the principal matter. This, however, consists in holding fast to all these manifestations of divinity to which the ecstatic condition afterward succeeds. No one, therefore, may justly suppose that the entheast condition is of the soul and of faculties belonging to it, or of the mind or of the energies or of bodily infirmity, or that without this latter concomitant it may not thus occur and be, as a matter of course, the underlying cause. For the matter of divine possession and inspiration is in no sense a human attainment, nor has it an origin in human organs and energies. On the contrary, these are subordinate, and the Divinity employs them as instruments. Neither the soul nor the body of the individual has the least agency in the matter, but he exercises the whole function of divination through himself; and being free, with no intermingling of anything extraneous; he works according to his own nature.

Hence, the vaticinations being thus performed as I describe, they are, of a certainty, incapable of being untruthful. But when the Soul begins beforehand or is disturbed in the meantime or takes part with the body, and interrupts the divine harmony, the divinations become tumultuous and false, and the inspiration is no longer true or genuine.

ORIGIN OF THE ENTHEASTIC RAPTURE.

Suppose, accordingly, that the genuine art of divining was a liberating of the divine from the other soul* or a separating of the mind by itself or an extending of its purview, or that it was a vehemence and extending of energy or passion or a sharpening and prompting of the understanding or an in-

*Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle and Zeno concur in the statement that the soul is itself of a several-fold nature. The "immortal principle" which proceeds from the Creator consists of the faculty of intelligence, the epistêmê or overmind, and sound judgment. The "mortal part" comprises the thumos or passionate, aggressive quality, and the epithumetic, appetitive or receptive nature.

spiriting of the mind. All such things being conditions which are set in motion by our own soul, it may be assumed with good reason that enthusiasm or inspiration has the same origin. But if the body is to be regarded as the cause of the inspired rapture or trance, on account of certain temperaments, either melancholic or some other, or, to speak more particularly, on account of heat and cold and moisture, or some form of these; or, in a word, the mingling or tempering of them or the breath, or more or less of these, in such case the bodily condition would be the cause of the aberration, and it would arise from the physical disturbances.* If, however, the origin arises from both these, from the body and the soul so far as these are blended together with each other, such activity will be common to them as a single living being. But on the contrary, it is neither an affair of the body nor of the soul nor of the two together. For there is not in these any cause of divine aberration, and it is not in the order of nature for superior things to be generated from those that are inferior.†

On the other hand, it is necessary to investigate the causes of the divine frenzy.‡ These are illuminations that come down

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*Plato declares in the *Timaios* that the faculty of divining is active only when the understanding or reasoning faculty is in abeyance, fettered by sleep or aliened by disease or the entheastic rapture. Plutarch imputes its activity to a certain crasis or condition of body through which it becomes separated from the consciousness of objects and matters that are immediately present.

†Abammon seems to clash with the modern dogma of evolution except as associated with the hypothesis of the Rev. Dr. James Martineau, that whatever is *e*volved or unwombed has been before *in*volved.

‡Greek, *μανια* mania, rage, madness, entheasm, religious excitement or rapture. The term is used here to denote the rapture incident upon being possessed by a superior power. Plato remarks in the *Phaidros:* "There are two kinds: one arising from human diseases, and the other by a digression from fixed habits." He subdivides the divine mania or entheasm into four kinds, and assigns the mantic or prophetic inspiration to Apollo, mystic inspiration to Dionysos, poetic inspiration to the Muses, and the passion of love to Aphroditê. This last, he declares to be the best of all enthusiasms and of the best origin, describing it as "the right hand of the divine mania, and the source of greatest blessing to us."

from the gods, the inspirations that are imparted from them, and the absolute authority from them, which not only encompasses all things in us but banishes entirely away the notions and activities which are peculiarly our own. The frenzy causes words to be let fall that are not uttered with the understanding of those who speak them; but it is declared, on the contrary, that they are sounded with a frenzied mouth, the speakers being all of them subservient and entirely controlled by the energy of the dominant intelligence. All enthusiasm is of such a character, and is brought to perfection from causes of such a kind; hence it is by impression, and not with precise accurateness, that we speak in relation to it.

THE MUSIC AT THE ARCANE RITES.

In addition to these things you remark as follows: "So also certain others of these ecstatics become entheast or inspired when they hear cymbals, drums, or some choral chant,* as, for example, those who are engaged in the Korybantic Rites,‡ those who are possessed at the Sabazian festival

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*Some exhibition of this kind is described by the Apostle Paul in the first Epistle to the Corinthians. "If," says he, "the whole assembly come together to the same place and all prattle in tongues, and common men should come in, or unbelievers, will they not say that you are raving?" Hence he counsels that only two or three should speak in turn, and one interpret; but if nobody present is capable of this, they should keep silence, and speak only to themselves and to God: "for not of tumult is he a god, but of tranquillity."†

There is evidently a deeper meaning in all this than is commonly apprehended.

†Ovid; Fasti, IV, "The attendants beat the brass, and the hoarse-sounding hides. Cymbals they strike in place of helmets, tambourines for the shields; the pipe yielded its Phrygian notes."

‡The Korybantes are variously described. Their cult was identified or closely allied to that of the Kabeirian divinities, and that of the Great Mother. It was celebrated in the islands of the Ægean Sea and in Phygia. Music, dancing, processions and ecstatic frenzy were characteristics.

and those who are celebrating the Rites of the Divine Mother.''*

It is proper, accordingly, to tell the causes of these things, how they came into existence, and what explanation there is for the performing of the Rites.

These allusions which you make, namely, that the music at these festivals is exciting and passionate; that the sound of the flutes causes or heals conditions of aberration; that the music changes the temperaments or dispositions of the body; that by some of the choral songs the Bacchic frenzy is excited, but by others the Bacchic orgies are made to cease; how the peculiar differences of these accord with the various dispositions of the soul, and also that the peculiar wavering and variable choric chants, such as those of Olympus, and others of the same kind, are adapted to the producing of ecstasies†—all of them seem to me to be stated in a manner unfavorable to the entheast condition; for they are both physical and human in their quality and performances, according to our technic, but nothing essentially divine appears in them.

We affirm, accordingly, not only that the shoutings and choric songs are sacred to the gods, each and all of them, as being peculiarly their own, but likewise that there is a kindred relationship between them in their proper order, according to their respective ranks and powers, the motions in the universe

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*Sabazios, Sabaoth or Sabbat, the god of the Planet Saturn, was better known as Bacchus or Dionysos, and was also styled in Semitic countries, Iao or Yava. His worship was more or less associated and identified with that of the Great Mother, under various designations, and it was characterized by phallephoric processions, dances, mourning for the slain divinity and the Watch Night. It came from Assyria as its peculiar symbols, the ivy or kissos, the spotted robe or Nimr, and the Thyrso, indicate. The name Zagreus, the Kissos and nimr remind us of Kissaia or Asiatic Æthiopia, and the Zagros mountains occupied by the Nimr. Assyria was called "the land of Nimrod."—Amos VIII.

†Proklos declared that the choral songs of Olympus were adapted to produce esctast. Plato describes an audience in *Ion,* comparing it to a series of iron rings connected by a chain and moved by the loadstone: "Some hand from one Muse and some from another," he remarks, "some, for example, from Orpheus, others from Musaios, but the greater part are inspired by Homer and are held fast by him."

itself and the harmonious sounds emitted from the motions. By the agency of such a relationship of the choric songs to the gods it is that their presence actually becomes manifest, for there is nothing intervening; and hence whatever has a mere incidental resemblance to them becomes immediately participant of them. There also takes place at once a perfect possession and filling with the divine essence and power. Nor is this because the body and soul are in each other, and affected alike in sympathy with the songs; but, on the contrary, it is because the inspiration of the gods is not separated from the divine harmony, and being allied with it, as being of the same kindred, it is shared by it in just measures. It is, however, aroused or checked, one or the other, according to the specific rank of the gods. But this is never by any means to be termed a separating, purifying, or a remedy. For, first of all, it is not dispensed on account of any disease or excess or plethora in us, but the whole beginning and course of operation are from the gods above.

On the contrary, it is not proper to say that the soul originally consisted of harmony and rhythm, for in that case the entheast condition is an inherent property of the soul alone. It will be better, therefore, to bring our discourse back to this statement: that the soul, prior to the giving of itself to the body, was a hearer of the divine harmony, and accordingly, when it came into a body it heard such songs as especially preserve throughout the divine trace of harmony, it followed them eagerly, recalled from them the remembrance of divine harmony, is borne along with it, becomes closely allied to it, and partakes of it as much as possible.

Hence we may generally explain in this way the source of the divine faculty of divination.

INSPIRATION AND ORGIASTIC EXCITEMENT.

Let us now proceed with our reasoning in relation to this subject of divination. We may not affirm this at the outset, namely, that Nature is leading everything to its own, for to be entheast is in no way a work of Nature; nor may we say that the composition and quality of the air and of the environment

create a different condition in the bodies of those that are entheast, for the divine products of inspiration are never modified by bodily powers or components; nor may we suppose that the divine inspiration gives sanction to special conditions and incidents, for the gift of the gods to human beings is the bestowing of their own energy, and is superior to everything of the sphere of generated existence. But since the power of the Korghantian divinities is, in a certain degree, of a guardian and perfecting character,* and the peculiar usages of the Sabazian worship make ready for the Bacchic enthusiasm, the purifying of souls, and deliverances from old incriminations, their respective inspirations are, accordingly, different in every important particular.†

Thou seemest to think that those who are enrapt by the Mother of the gods are males, for thou callest them, accordingly, "Metrizontes"; yet that is not true, for the "Metrizontesæ" are chiefly women. A very few, however, are males, and such as may be more delicate. This enthusiasm has a power that is both life-engendering and perfective, in which respect it differs from every other form of frenzy.

Proceeding thus, after this way, into what remains of the present discussion, and distinguishing particularly the inspirations of the Nymphs or of Pan, and their other specific differences with reference to the powers of the gods, we shall treat of them separately according to their respective peculiarities; and shall, likewise, explain why they sally forth and spend time in the mountains, why some of them appear bound, and why they are to be worshipped by offerings. We shall likewise attribute these things to the sources of divine authority,

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*In these rites the worshippers danced, forming a circle around the altar. See also I Kings, XVIII, 26. With the Korghantians, this represented a guard about the Demiangos or Creator; with the Kuretes, it denoted a protecting of the divine maid Kora.

†Servius remarks that the Sacred observances of Father Liber, the Roman Bacchus, related to the purification of souls. This cleansing, as here declared, was considered to be not only from contamination acquired by coming into the conditions of physical existence, but also from guilt actually incurred.

as they possess all power in themselves; but we shall neither affirm that an accumulation of refuse of the body or soul requires to be cleansed away, nor that the periods of the seasons are the cause of such ill conditions, nor that the receiving of what is similar and the taking away of the contrary will prove a remedy for an excess of this kind. For all such things are set down in the category of the corporeal, and are entirely separate from a divine and spiritual life. Each, however, succeeds in accomplishing the operations which pertain to its own nature. Hence the spirits that are aroused by the gods, and that excite human beings to the Bacchic frenzy, overstep every other human and natural activity, and it is not right to compare their operations to those taking place in ordinary ways; but in respect to those which are utterly strange, and of earliest origin, it is proper to refer them back to the gods as authors. One form of divine inspiration is, accordingly, of this kind, and takes place after this manner.

THE ORACLES.

Another mode of entheastic divining, that of Oracles, is famous, and very plain in many ways, concerning which thou declarest such things as these, namely: "Others are inspired when drinking water, like the priest of the Klarian Apollo at Kolophon; others when sitting over cavities in the earth, like the women who deliver the oracles at Delphi; others when overpowered by vapors from the water, like the prophetesses at Branchidæ."

Thou hast mentioned these three oracles by name, not because there are only these, for there are many more which thou hast passed over in silence; but since these take rank before the others, and on account of which are more sought, thou art sufficiently instructed in respect to the mode of divining. I will now, because thou hast enough of these things, speak of the oracular art which has been sent down to human beings from the gods. We will, therefore, make our discourse in relation to these three, and not let a word fall respecting the many other oracles.

It is acknowledged by everybody that the oracle at Kolo-

phon gives its responses through the medium of water. There is a spring in a house underground, and from this the prophet drinks. On certain appointed nights, many sacred ceremonies having taken place beforehand, he drinks, and delivers oracles, but he is not seen by the beholders who are present. It is manifest from this, therefore, that that water possesses an oracular quality; but how this is so not every man, as the saying is, may know. For it seems as though a mantic spirit extended through it; but this is not true. For the divine being does not go about among its participants, thus divided and apportioned; but, on the contrary, it shines upon the fountain as though giving of itself from without, and fills it with the mantic power from itself. The inspiration which the water imparts is by no means all of it from the god, but it causes an adaptedness alone and a purification of the light-like spirit* in us, through which we become able to contain the divinity; but the presence of the god is different from this, and prior to it, and it flashes in from above like the lightning. Indeed, this presence forsakes no one of those who, through kindred nature, are in intimate union to it; but it is immediately present, and employs the prophet as an instrument, he neither being normally himself, nor aware of what he is saying or where on the earth he is. Hence, after giving the oracles, he recovers control of himself at a later moment with difficulty. Indeed, before drinking the water he fasts an entire day and night, and as he begins to become entheast he withdraws by himself into certain sacred retreats. Thus, by this withdrawing and separating from human affairs, he makes himself pure, and prepared for the receiving of the divinity; and through this means

*Mr. Thomas Taylor refers us to the treatise accredited to Plutarch, on the "Failure of the Oracles," in which this matter is explained at length. The faculty of divining, this author declares, is farthest withdrawn from this present condition by that idiosyncrasy of body which favors the development of the entheast condition. "The soul does not acquire the faculty of divining when clear of the body," he says, "for it has the same before, but is blinded by the commixture and confusion which it has with the body." Hence he argues, "we do not divest divination either of divine origin or of rationality, seeing that we allow it for its subject, the Human Soul, and for its instrument an aura or exhalation productive of the entheastic rapture."

he has the inspiration of the divinity illuminating the pure sanctuary of his own soul, and he likewise effects by himself, unobstructed, the possession and divine presence complete and without impediment.

The prophetess at Delphi, however, whether she gives oracles to human beings from a tenuous and fire-like spirit brought up from somewhere through an aperture,* or vaticinates sitting in the inner shrine, upon the bronze chair with three feet or upon the four-footed chair sacred to the divinities,† gives herself up entirely to the divine spirit and is shined upon by the ray of the fire. In fact, when the fiery mist coming up from the aperture, dense and abundant, encompasses her on every side in a circle, she becomes filled by it with a divine luminance, and when she sits down in the seat of the god she comes into harmony with the unwavering oracular power of the divinity, and from these two preparatory operations she becomes entirely the medium of the god. Then truly is the god present, shining upon her separately, being himself other than the fire, the spirit, their peculiar seats and all the visible apparatus about the place, physical and sacred.

The woman also who delivers the oracles in verse at Branchidai, whether she is holding the staff‡ which was first presented by a divinity and becomes filled with the divine lumi-

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*Modern writers have conjectured that this exhalation was of the nature of nitrous protoxide. Such a deriving of prophetic inspiration from "laughing gas" has a resemblance to the concept that Emanuel Swedenborg acquired his illumination by drinking coffee, and is equally absurd.

†Apollo and Dionysos Zagreus his hearth-mate were the divinities at Delphi.

‡The staff, rod, wand, scepter, or baton, as the symbol of authority, possesses the greatest antiquity. It appears in mythology as the scepter of Zeus charged with lightning, the caduceus of Hermes that lulled to sleep, the staff of Asklepios with healing virtue, the narthex or thyrsos of Bacchus, and the club of Herakles. Every Roman Senator carried a wand. The rods of Moses and Aaron, the staff of the prophet, the wand of Kirkê, the magic divining staff and the bishop's crosier belong in the same category.

nance, or whether she sits upon a wheel and predicts what is to occur, or whether she dips her feet or the border of her robe in the water, or receives the god by inhaling vapor from the water, she becomes by all these ways prepared for the reception, and partakes of him from without.*

These things, therefore, are plain to view, namely: the abundance of offerings, the established law of the whole sacred Observance, and such other things as are performed in a manner worthy of a god, prior to the oracular responding, such as the baths of the prophetess, her fasting for three entire days, her abiding in the interior shrine and having there already the light and enjoying it a long time. For these things all make it manifest that there is an invoking of the deity, and that he becomes present as though coming from outside; and not only that the prophetess, before she takes her position in the accustomed place, receives an inspiration of a wonderful character, but likewise in the very spirit that is brought up from the fountain shows forth another divinity more ancient comes to view, separate from the place, who is the cause or the author of the place, of the fountain, and of the whole technic of divining.†

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*Branchidia or Didymea was situated near Milletus in Ionia. The temple was very ancient. It was twice burned by the Persians. The structure was of the Ionic order, but a straight road, which led from it to the sea, was bordered on each side with statues on charis of a single block of stone with the feet close together and the hands on the knees precisely as at the avenues of the temples of Egypt. There was an Egyptian influence in Asia Minor and the islands of the Levant in very ancient times.

†The divinity here indicated belonged to the pantheon of Egypt. He was probably Imopht or Emeph the Asklepios of the Egyptians.

VIII

THE DIVINING ART UNIVERSAL

CHAPTER VIII

THE DIVINING ART UNIVERSAL.

It clearly appears, therefore, that the technic of divining at the oracles accords with all the hypotheses which we have put forth in respect to the mantic art. For such a faculty, being inseparable from the constitution of places and bodies that are subjects of it, or preceded by a motion limited by number, cannot always prognosticate in the same manner things occurring in every place. But being separate and free from places and things that are measured by the enumerations of times as though superior to those existing in relations to time, and from those that are held fast by place, it is present with objects equally wherever they are, and is always conversant at once with those coming into existence in time, and likewise includes in one the truth of all things by virtue of its own separate and superior essence.

If, indeed, we have stated these things rightly, the divining power of the gods is not encompassed in parts by anything—neither by place, nor by a divisible human body, nor by a soul that is held fast in a single form of divisible qualities, but being separate by itself, and indivisible, it is present everywhere in entirety with those who are able to receive it. Not

only does it shine from without, and fill all things, but it likewise permeates all the elements, occupies the earth, and air and fire and water, and leaves nothing destitute of itself—neither living beings nor things sustained from the realm of nature. On the contrary, it imparts from itself an allotment of the faculty of foreknowing to some in a greater and to others in a smaller degree. Existing itself before all things, it is able, by reason of its separateness, to permeate and fill all things, according as every one is able to receive of it.

DECEPTIVE DIVINATION.

Let us now examine after this the other form of divination which is private and not public, concerning which thou sayest as follows: "Others are affected by standing upon indented marks,* like those who have been filled from an imperceptible inflowing of the divine pleroma." Hence because of those who make a bad use of this form of divining it is by no means easy to include it in a single explanation. On the contrary, being near at hand, and in a pernicious degree superficial, it is employed by many persons in falsehood and deception which may not be tolerated. Nor is there any god present at all, but a certain motion of the soul is produced which is repugnant to the gods, and allures from them a certain indistinct and phantom-like apparition which sometimes, because of the transient power, is likely to be thrown into disorder by the spiritual emanations of evil demons. But an appearing which chances to be genuine is likewise in other respects distinct, pure, unchangeable, true, and both inaccessible and unobstructed by spirits of a contrary temper. In like manner the darkness, from its peculiar nature, is not able to remain under the glowing sunshine, but suddenly becomes totally invisible, goes completely away from where it was, and takes itself off.

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*Goethe indicates a magic power in certain marks or characters when he describes Mephistopheles as fastened inside the chamber by the pentagram:

"I must confess, my stepping o'er
Thy threshold a slight hindrance doth impede:
The Wizard's Foot doth me restrain."

So also when the power of the gods shines forth in many directions, pervading everything with its benefits, the mob of evil spirits has no field of activity and is not able to manifest itself in any way, but, on the contrary, falls back as nothing into non-existence, having no nature for activity at all when superior beings are present, and not being able to throw them into disorder when they are giving forth light.*

Whereas, therefore, there is such a difference in each of these classes, I will make use of no other tokens to distinguish them than those which thou hast mentioned. For when thou affirmest that "some are affected by standing on indented marks" thou seemest to signify nothing else than the cause of all the evils relating to these things. For there are some who overlook the whole matter of the Perfective Vision, not only in regard to the one making the invocation, and also the Beholder, but they likewise hold in contempt the arrangement of religious worship and the most sacred ordeal of encountering prolonged penances,† and also reject the sacred laws and ordinances and other Holy Rites. They consider the standing upon indented marks to be enough, and imagine that by doing this for a single hour there is a certain spirit introduced. Yet how may anything worthy or perfective take place from these things? Or how is the eternal and real essence of the gods to

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*Proklos explains that when initiatory ceremonies are taking place, as in spiritual manifestations generally, baser spirits will often assume the guise of the superior genii, and draw away souls that are not pure. Hence the Chaldean Oracles declare that it is not proper to participate in them till purity is attained. "They enchant the souls and lead them away." Proklos says again, "In the most sacred of the Perfective Rites, they say that the candidates first encounter the multiformed and many-shaped races which come to view before the gods are to be seen; but they go on to the Mystic Cave unswerving, and having been made secure by the Rites they receive the divine illumination without alloy into their bosoms, and being stripped, so to speak, they partake of the divine nature. This, I think," he adds, "is what takes place in the spectacular manifestations."

†In all initiatory rites a probation takes place to test the fidelity and endurance of the candidates. The "Tortures" of the Mithraic Initiations consisted of long fasting, exposure to the severity of the climate, and terrors of wild beasts and the execution of a capital sentence.

be combined in sacred operations with temporary performances? Hence, through things of this character, such silly men go entirely astray, and are not worthy to be numbered with diviners.

OTHER MODES OF ENTRANCEMENT.

In regard to another kind of divination thou makest this statement, namely: "Others who understand themselves in other respects be one divinely inspired through the fancy:* some taking darkness as accessory, others employing certain potions, and others depending on singing and magic figures. Some are affected by means of water, others by gazing on a wall, others by the hypæthral air, and others by the sun or some other of the heavenly luminaries."

All this kind of divination which thou describest as being of numerous species may be comprehended in a single faculty, which may be denominated the "Bringing of Light." This evidently shines, however, with a divine luminance upon the ether-like and brilliant vehicle† which surrounds the soul, from which vehicle the divine imaginations, being set in motion by the will of the gods, take possession of the faculty of imagination in us. For the whole life of the soul and all the faculties in it being subject to the gods, are set in motion in whatever manner the leaders may desire.

This takes place in one of two ways: from the gods being present in the soul, or from the shining into it of a light coming beforehand from them. In either case the divine presence and the illumination are entirely separate. The attention and the reasoning faculty of the soul are therefore conscious of the events, because the divine light does not extend to these. The fancy, however, is divinely affected. As it varies entirely

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*Greek, *φανταστικόν* (*Phantasia,* or imagination) is defined by Chrysippos and Plutarch as the faculty which reveals itself and its causes; *phantastikon* or fancy, the term here used, as a vain impulse of the mind with no real cause; *phantaston* as the imaginable, anything that may make an impression; *phantasma,* a phantom, an apparition.

†The vehicle is called the "astral aura" by Paracelsus, and Kamarupa by Hindu sages.

from the habits of human beings, it is not excited from itself to the modes of imagination, but from the gods.

Since, however, the contrary principle, through a change throughout and absence from itself, is capable of receiving its contrary, or that which is akin or homogeneous through similarity may receive its like, the light-bringers likewise take the darkness as an auxiliary, and likewise employ the light of the Sun or of the Moon, or, in short, the open air, for illuminating.

Sometimes, however, they also make use of established conditions such as are familiar to the gods that are about to be brought thither, or chants or dramatic compositions; these having been suitably prepared for the order of reception, the coming and appearing of the gods. Sometimes, again, they conduct the light through water, since this medium, being transparent, is well adapted for the receiving of light.* But at other times they cause it to shine upon a wall, having beforehand made ready in the best manner a place in the wall for the reception of the light, by sacred delineations of engraved figures, and at the same time fixing it firmly in a solid place so that it may not be too much diffused.

There are also many other ways for bringing the Light; but they may all be reduced to one, namely: to its illumination in whatever way and through whatever instrumentalities the gods may choose to shine forth. Since not only the light is from without, and alone possesses everything subject to the will and intelligence of the gods, but, what is more important, it has a sacred irradiation derived not only under the æther on high but also from the air or from the moon or the sun, or some other celestial sphere, it is manifest from all these things that such a mode of divination is unlimited, primary in operation, and worthy of the gods.

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*Damaskios explains this operation: "There was a sacred woman who had a nature divinely endowed in a wonderful degree. Pouring pure water into a glass cup, she saw in the water in the cup the ideal appearance of things about to take place, and foretold from the view things that would occur. But," adds he, "of such an experiment, we ourselves are not ignorant."

DIVINING BY AUGURY.

Come, then, let us pass on to the mode of divining which is carried into operation through a human technic, and involves much guessing and expecting. In regard to this thou speakest as follows: "Some have likewise established the technic of searching the future by means of entrails, birds and stars." There are also many other such technics, but these are sufficient for the exhibiting of every form of the art of divining. So, then, to tell the whole story this method makes use of many signs or symbols which have in various ways been made efficacious by the gods. From the divine tokens, according to the relationship of things to the signs that have been exhibited, the technic in some way arrives at conclusions, and guesses at the augury, inferring it from certain probabilities. The gods, then, create the signs either through the agency of nature, which is itself subservient to the generation of everything both general and particular, or else through the demons that operate in the generative sphere, who, taking control of the component parts of the universe, and of partible bodies, and likewise of all living things in the world, bring out with facility the phenomena which are pleasing to the gods. They make known beforehand, symbolically, the purpose of the divinity that is about to come, as explained by Herakleitos, "neither telling nor concealing, but indicating by signs." Thus, by foreshadowing, they impress, as by a likeness, the manner of the creation. In like manner, therefore, they generate all things by means of images, and likewise signify them beforehand through instituted emblematic representations. Equally, also, by this means, they excite our faculty of understanding to a greater acuteness. Let these things, therefore, be determined in common by us in regard to all technic of this kind that men have devised.

In particular, however, the soul of living animals, the demon that is set over them, the atmosphere, and likewise the motion of the atmosphere, and the revolution of the surrounding sky, transform the entrails in various ways as may please the gods. A sign of this is that they are often found without

a heart, or in some way dismembered of some of the principal parts,* of which, when they are deprived, it is not at all possible that the life should remain in the animals. Not only, however, the impulse of their own soul moves the birds, but the guardian demon of the animals also sets them in motion. Likewise, the circulation of the atmosphere, and the potential force which passes down from the sky into the air, making everything in harmony with the divine purposes, lead them in conformity to what the gods arrange originally. The most important sign of this is that of the birds themselves tearing, and many times actually destroying, themselves; for this is a thing not natural for anything to do. But this art of divining is a thing of a superior nature, so that it is a something else accomplishing these things through the birds.

Moreover, the circuits of the stars come near to the perpetual revolutions of the sky, not only in space but also in powers and in the radiations of light. But they are moved in whatever way the gods in the sky impel them. For the most absolutely pure and supreme principle of the atmosphere being closely affiliated to fire, they, as the gods make the sign, are also lighted up immediately. If, however, any one thinks that certain auras of the divinities of the sky are given off into the atmosphere, he will not have conjectured anything foreign to what is often performed in the divine art of divination. The oneness, and also the sympathy, of everything, and likewise the simultaneous motion of the parts that are farthest away as though they were near by and parts of one animate being, cause the sending of these signs from the gods to human beings, first through the sky and then through the atmosphere appearing to men, especially brilliant.

This, then, becomes manifest through the statements that have been made, namely: That the gods, making use of many intermediate instrumentalities, send forth signs to human be-

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*When Julius Cæsar was assassinated it was affirmed by the Augurs, that the event was foreshadowed by the absence of a head to the liver of the animal sacrificed that day; and on the morning of the murder of the Emperor Pertinax the victims were said one of them to lack a heart, and the other, a liver.

ings, employing not only the services of demons, but also of souls and the whole realm of nature; they likewise leading all these, their followers, from the first beginning throughout the cosmic universe, and transmitting the impulse which goes forth from them whither they please. Being, therefore, themselves separate from all and free from all relationship and common nature with those in the region of generated existence, they lead everything in the realms of generation and production according to their own purpose.

This explanation in respect to the art of divination agrees accordingly with the theory of the creation and foreknowledge of the gods, for it does not drag down the mind of the superior beings to this region and to us; but instead, this, remaining stable in itself, turns to itself not only the signs, but likewise the whole art of divining, and discovers them proceeding from it.

ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF DIVINATION CORRECTED.

Thou askest likewise, in relation to "the nature of divination, what it is and what is its peculiar character." This we have explained already, both generally and specifically. But thou, first of all, hast put forth this statement: "The diviners all say that they arrive at the foreknowing of the future through gods or demons,* and that it is not possible for others to have any inkling of it—only those who have command over the things to be." Thou then remarkest, as if hesitating: "I dispute whether the divine power is brought down to such subserviency to human beings, as, for instance, not to hold aloof from any who are diviners with barley meal."

But when thou appliest the term "subserviency" to the providential care and protection that we enjoy thou failest to understand aright the vastness of the power of the gods, the goodness transcending and the causality which includes

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*There are three modes of forecasting: prophecy, divination and guessing; and they are referred respectively to divinity, demons and observation of the course of things. Demons appear to be the same as the "angels" of the Judæan and Christian theology. "Both gods and demons have a certain and unerring knowledge of things to come," says Proklos.

all things. Besides, thou overlookest the mode of energy, that it is neither attracted downward nor turned toward us, but precedes us, as being separate from us and entirely distinct. It, indeed, imparts itself to the recipients, but in this it neither goes out from itself nor becomes lessened, nor is subservient to those that participate of it. On the contrary, it makes use of all as being subservient to itself.

The observation which thou hast suggested appears to me to be a complete mistake in another particular. If we take for granted that the doings of the gods are similar to those of men, there will a question arise as to how they are performed. For in supposing that because we ourselves undergo changes, and are sometimes affected by the conditions of various affairs to which we are attending, on this very account thou dost, in the concept that the power of the gods is at all subservient to those that are governed by it, conjecture wrongly. Neither in the making of worlds nor in the foresight of the realm of generated existence nor in the divining in respect to it, is the divine power ever attracted from its sphere to those that participate of the outflow. But, on the other hand, it shares its benefits with all, and makes all to be like itself. It not only serves those abundantly that belong to its circle, but the more it remains by itself so much the more it is filled from its own stores. It does not itself become of the quality of those that participate of it, but it renders its partakers similar to itself. It preserves them in every way, but remains complete in itself; it includes them within its own sphere, but at the same time is neither mastered nor encompassed by any one of them. In vain, therefore, does an undermeaning of such a kind cause annoyance to individuals, for the god is not divided and portioned out as a commodity among the different modes of divining, but without such division it produces them all. Nor does he bring different matters to completion separately in regard to time, and in different ways, but operates them all together at once and according to one design. Nor is he held fast in respect to signs, as being encompassed by them or parceled out by them. On the other hand, he arranges signs in himself in a single order, and like-

wise includes them in one concept, and issues them forth from himself according to a single purpose.

If, however, the power of the gods in this matter of prognostication extends to objects without soul, such as little pebbles, rods, certain trees, stones, wheat or barley meal,* this is itself a most wonderful form of predicting by divine vatication, because it is an imparting of soul to things that are without soul, and motion to objects that of themselves are incapable of moving, and makes everything clear and knowable, participant of the reasoning faculty, and definable according to the measures of intelligence, and yet having nothing of rationality by themselves.

Another thing which the god brings to notice in the displays appears to me to be nothing less than a superhuman wonder: for as he sometimes makes a man of moderate attainments and understanding utter apothegms full of wisdom, through which it is made plain that the occurrence is not a human, but a divine performance, so through agencies destitute of knowledge he reveals perceptions which were prior to any knowing. At the same time the god makes it manifest to individuals that the signs and tokens which are exhibited are worthy of belief, and that he is superior to the realm of nature, and exalted above it.

Thus the things in the realm of nature which were unknown he makes known, and those which are unknowable he makes knowable. Not only does he, through these, implant sagacity in us, but he also, through everything that is in the universe, sets our mind in motion toward the knowledge of the truth—of the things that are, of the things that are coming into existence, and the things that will be—the Past, Present and Future.

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*Various modes of divining were employed. We read that the patriarch Joseph divined with his cup (*Genesis,* xiv, 5): the Syrian ambassadors took the mode of reply from Ahab as a token (*I Kings,* xx, 33). The Skyths and other ancient peoples divined with rods of tamarisk. Laurel leaves were also used. The King of Babylon decided to lead his army against Jerusalem, after a divination with arrows (*Ezekiel,* xxi, 21, 22). The lot was common; indeed it was supposed that the conditions of life in the earth were established by such allotment.

From these considerations it is evident, I think, that the mode of divination is absolutely contrary to those ways which thou dost mistrust and suppose; for it is authoritative, and first in operation, and likewise self-governing and transcendent, encompassing all things in itself, but not itself encompassed by any, or enclosed in limited conditions by its participants. On the other hand, it takes its place above, and exercises authority over all as a single assemblage, without distinctions, but ruling over the whole with unlimited power, and giving forth signs and portents collectively.

Thou wilt, therefore, from these premises, easily resolve those doubts which are personal and annoying to many individuals, and duly raise thyself to the perception of the spiritual, divine and undeceptive foretokens of the gods that are manifested from all sources.

We contend, therefore, that the divine power is not brought down into the signs and symbols of the art of divination.

THE DIVINITIES PRESENT AT THE RITES

Another controversy now awaits us, not less in significance than the one which has just been finished. Thou introducest it at once in regard to the divinities that are the causative powers in the art of divination, by questioning "whether a god or angel or demon, or some other such being, is present at the manifestations (epiphanies) or at the divinations or at any of the Sacred Performances."

The simple reply which we make to this is that it is not possible for the Divine Performances to be carried on in a manner befitting sacred matters without some one of the superior races being present, beholding and making the Sacred Performances complete.* Accordingly, when the procedures are perfect, sufficient of themselves, and without defect, gods are their directors. But when they are only suitable for the intermediary races (as angels and demons), and fall somewhat short of what is due to the highest beings, then they have angels to make them complete and make the exhibitions. But

*See Deceptive Divination, page 132.

those which are classed as lowest and last are assigned to the demons to be performed.

The successful accomplishment of the divine services is always confided to some one of the superior orders. Since it is not permissible, without the gods, even to prattle a word in respect to the gods, it may be taken for granted that god-like achievements and all forms of prognostication are not conducted successfully except with the gods present. For the human tribe is weak and of little account; it sees but little, and possesses nothing by nature. But for the inherent tendency in it for wandering, disorder and unstable changing, the one remedy is whether it may participate, so far as it is able, of some portion of the divine light. But whoever seeks to exclude this does the same thing as those who attempt to develop a soul from objects that are without soul, or generate mind from those destitute of mind. For he proposes without the agency of a divine cause to create divine works from materials that are not divine.

Let it be conceded, then, that a god or demon or angel is bringing the superior rites to completeness. We do not grant in the least what thou throwest out as an acknowledged fact, namely: That the superior beings bring these things to pass, "as having been drawn thither, through us, by the necessities created by the invocation." For the god, and the entire chorus of superior beings connected with him, are superior to necessity—not alone from the necessity which is induced by human beings, but also that necessity which holds the world in its grasp. Hence, it is not the province of the nature which is non-material, and not receptive of any acquired order, to be subservient to any necessity coming in from elsewhere.

Then, again, the invocation and the rites performed by the adept in superior knowledge bring them to the superior races and attach them together by becoming assimilated and of the same household; but they never bring their operations to completion by compulsory endeavor. Hence, the occurrences are not observed in the persons entranced, as thou thinkest, the theurgic adept being in a passive condition; nor is divining effected through a necessity, a passive condition being

dominant in the delivering of the oracle. For these conditions are foreign to the essence of the superior beings, and in other respects unsuitable.

DIVINATION PURELY A DIVINE OPERATION.

On the contrary, neither is the cause of these manifestations of the superior beings like an intermediate instrumentality, nor does the person who makes the invocations act through the one that is entranced; and to assert these things is sacrilegious. For this is much more true, namely: That God is all, he is all-powerful, he has filled all from himself, and he alone is worthy of highest regard, praise and supreme honor.*

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*Mr. Thomas Taylor adds this note: "God is all things causally, and is able to effect all things. He likewise does produce all things, yet not by himself alone, but in conjunction with those divine powers which continually germinate, as it were, from him, as from a perennial root. Not that he is in want of these powers to the efficacy of his productive energy, but the universe requires their coöperation, in order to the distinct subsistence of its various parts and different forms. For as the essence of the first cause, if it be lawful so to speak, is full of deity, his immediate energy must be deific, and his first progeny must be gods. But as he is ineffable and superessential, all things proceed from him ineffably and superessentially. For progressions are conformable to the characteristics of the natures from which they proceed. Hence the coöperative energy of his first progeny (the minor gods) is necessary to the evolution of things into effable, essential and distinct subsistence. The supreme God, therefore, is alone worthy; but this is not to the exclusion of paying appropriate attention and honor to other powers that are subordinate to him, who largely participate of his divinity, and are more or less allied to him. For in reverencing and paying attention to these appropriately, we also attend to and reverence him. For that which we attend to, honor and esteem in them, is that alone which is of a *deified* nature, and is therefore a portion, as it were, of the ineffable principle of all things.

"Mighty study and labor about these intermediate powers is necessary in order to our union with their ineffable cause. For as we are but the dregs of the rational nature, and the first principle of things is something so transcendent as to be even beyond essence, it is impossible that we should be united to him without media: viz., without the gods and their perpetual attendants, who are on this account, *true saviors* of souls. For in a union with the supreme deity our true salvation consists."

What is human when it is compared with the divine is base, insignificant, and a mere plaything. Hence, I laugh when I hear that the god is automatically present with certain persons or objects, whether through the Cycle of nativity or through other causes. For if he is controlled by the Cycle of nativity the unbegotten divinity will not then be the superior; nor will he, as he is himself arranged with certain things with reference to other causes, be primarily a cause of all things. These suggestions, therefore, are also unworthy of the conception which we should entertain in regard to the gods, and are entirely foreign to the performances which take place in Theurgy.*

Such inquiry, however, is subject to the same condition which the many experience in regard to the Creation of the universe and providence. For not being able to learn what is the nature of these, and likewise discarding the deep thoughts and arguments of individuals in respect to the divine beings, they take all recognition of providence and creation entirely away from them.

We are accustomed to meet these individuals with the answer that the divine mode of creation and guardianship is different from what they suppose of such things, and that it is not proper for them, because of their ignorance, to reject it as not having existed from the beginning. So, likewise, it may be pleaded with thee that all foreknowledge and doing of sempiternal works are the works of gods, and are neither performed through necessity nor through different human causes, but wrought through such causes as the gods alone know.

DIVINATION NOT A FACULTY OF THE SOUL.

Passing these things by accordingly, we may now, with good reason, proceed to explain the second cause which thou

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*The sentiment here enforced is that no prayer or rite has any efficacy to attract a divine being, and so bring down God, but rather it exalts the worshipper to the Divinity. Proklos also says: "In the invocations and at the Autopsia, the divine essence seems after a manner to come down to us, when really we are extending ourselves to it instead."

hast set forth, namely: "That the soul utters and imagines these things, and that they are peculiar conditions of it, which have been produced from little sparks."*

On the contrary, neither are these things from the realm of nature, nor does the reasoning faculty accept them. For everything that comes into existence comes from a specific cause, and that which is of kindred nature is brought to pass by that which is akin to it. But the divine operation is not automatic, for such a thing is without a cause and not in any way arranged. Nor is it the product of a human cause, for this is alien to it and subordinate, and that which is more perfect cannot issue from that which is less perfect.† All operations, therefore, which are like divinity in their nature have their inception from a divine cause. For the human soul is held fast by a solitary ideal, and is kept in the dark by the body on every side. Whether this condition is termed the river Amaletê or water of Lethê or ignorance and insanity or bondage through passive conditions or deficiency of vital force, or some other evil thing, it will not be a name sufficiently expressive to denote its badness.‡

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*PLUTARCH: *Why the Oracles Cease to Give Answers.* 89.—"The soul does not have the faculty of divining when clear of the body as from a cloud; but it is blinded by its commingling and confusion with the mortal nature."

†Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU: *Place of Mind in Nature.*—"Surely nothing can be evolved that is not first involved. Evolution and prospection are inseparable conceptions. Go back as you will, and try to propel the movement from behind instead of drawing it from before, development in a definite direction toward the realization of a dominant scheme of ascending relations, is the sway of an over-ruling end."

‡"Amaletê" signifies carelessness, negligence; "Lethê" means the extinction of remembrances; ignorance is inability for real knowing. Plato in the "Republic," Book X, describes a vision in which the souls are seen in the act of selecting for themselves the quality of a new life in the earth. By the choice they make, their guardian demon is allotted to them. Then they drink the water of Lethê "which no vessel contains" and forget all the past.

Irenæos, cavilling at Plato, demanded how he knew all this; adding that if he knew part he ought to know all. He seems to have overlooked the fact of a mantic or supraconscious condition in which such things may be known as they are perceived, to an extent commensurate with the development of the intuitive faculty.

The soul being held by such restraint, how may it become sufficient for such an operation? It is by no means reasonable to suppose such a thing. For if we seem at any time to be able to effect a participation, and to be enlightened by the gods, it is by this alone that we derive benefit of the divine energy. On this account, the soul not possessing intrinsic excellence and sagacity, it does not participate of the divine operations. Indeed, if such operations pertained to the soul, every soul, or at least the solitary one endowed with intrinsic completeness, would perform them. Now, however, not one or another of them is sufficiently prepared for this. On the contrary, so far as relates to the divine energy, even the perfect soul is incomplete.

The theurgic energy, therefore, is different, and the successful accomplishment of the divine works is enabled by the gods alone. If the fact were otherwise this would not be at all necessary in the service of the gods, but we would have the divine boons in this case without religious worship. If these opinions are like madness, and without sense, it is proper to discard such undermeanings as furnishing a cause worthy of mention for the fulfilling of divine operations.

DIVINATION NOT OF TWOFOLD ORIGIN.

Thirdly, thou subjoinest the following statement, namely: "That there is a mingled form of substance produced from our own soul and from the divine inbreathings from without." Is it any more true than the others?

Look at this more critically, lest from being entangled by its apparent plausibility, we pass it by without noticing. For if any one thing is, perchance, brought into existence from two, it is generally alike in form, alike in nature, and alike in essence. So the elements coming together into the same association produce one specific element out of many, and many souls are joined together into one entire soul. Certainly, however, anything which is completely taken away cannot ever become one with that which is going forth from itself; neither may the soul be constituted of one form of substance with

the divine inbreathing. For if the divine nature is unmingled the soul is not commingled with it, and if it subsists unchangeable it will not be changed through any combination from its simple essence into any community of elements with anything else.

Certain individuals of former times were, therefore, of the opinion that "small sparks" kindled up divine ideals in us, which, whether they are from the realm of nature or of the nature of the body in some other manner, cannot be changed from things of chance into things divine. In the present instance, however, the suggestion is made that the soul is a joint element in the divine commixture. This is equivalent to saying that the soul is equal in importance to the gods, and likewise that it imparts to them a certain constituent and receives one from them in return; and also that it imposes conditions upon the superior beings and is itself limited in its sphere by them.

But there are others who affirm what is most mischievous, namely: That the gods, being the interior cause in the order of the elements, coëxist in the beings that are brought into existence by them, and that there will be an outbirth that will be produced since time, and of a commingling during time, and that it will encompass the gods in itself. But in such event what is this commingled form of substance? For if it is both, conjoined together (the soul and the divine inbreathing), it will not be one single thing from out of two, but as composed from two put together at random. But if it is an entity, other than both, then we must admit that things eternal will be subject to change, and the divine essences will differ in nothing from physical ones in the realm of generated existence. The supposition that an eternal being may be brought into the world through nativity is absurd; but to imagine that anything consisting of eternal qualities will be dissolved is more absurd.

By no means, therefore, has such an opinion in respect to divination any reasonableness; but now we must consider this notion paradoxic, whoever may propose it, whether one or two.

IX

DEMONS

CHAPTER IX

DEMONS

Thy next supposition comes up now for consideration, namely: "That the Soul, through such activities, generates from itself a faculty of imagination in regard to the future, or else that the emanations from the realm of nature bring demons into existence through their inherent forces, especially when the emanations are derived from animals."

These statements appear to me to exhibit a fearful disregard of the principles pertaining to divinity, and likewise those of the theurgic operation. For one absurdity appears at the outset, namely: that the demons are generated and perishable things.* But another one more woful than this is, that by this hypothesis those beings that are prior are produced from those that are posterior to themselves. For the demons existed already in some manner before soul and the faculties incident to the bodily structures. Besides these considerations, how is it possible that the energies of the divisible soul, which is held fast in a body, be transformed into essence and be separate by themselves outside of the soul? Or how may the faculties incident to the bodies, which have their very being in the bodies, become separate from them? Who is it that is freeing them from the corporeal framework and collecting the dissolved substance into one group? For a being of such a character will be a demon preëxisting before the placing of the component elements together. The statement, however, has also the usual perplexity. For how may divining be pro-

*Plutarch in his treatise on "Oracles" speaks of Hesiod limiting the soul of a demon and the life of a demigod, and also represents Xenokrates as saying that the nature of demons is endued with the passions and perturbations of the mortal nature and the force and power of the divine.

duced from things that have no oracular quality, and how may soul be generated from bodies that are without a soul? Or, to say the whole at once, how may the things which are more complete be produced from those which are less complete? The mode of producing appears to me likewise to be impossible. For to produce essence through the activities of the soul and through the powers in the bodies is not possible; for from the things which do not have it, essence cannot be developed.

Whence comes the imagination of that which is about to take place? From what does it receive the faculty of divining? For of the things which have been sown anywhere through generation we absolutely never see anything possessing more than what is imparted to it from the first parentage. But it seems that the imagination may receive a certain superior addition from what has no being; unless it may be said that the demons get a foothold upon the matter from the [sacrificed] animals, and that, being brought under their influence, they are moved in respect to it by a common sympathy. According to this opinion, therefore, the demons are not generated from the forces inherent in bodies, but being at the lead of them, and existing before them, they are moved in like manner with them. Granted that they are thus exceedingly sympathetic, yet I do not see in what manner there will be anything true in regard to what is to come. For the foreknowing and forecasting of the future do not come within the range of a sympathetic power, nor a nature belonging to the realm of matter, and held fast in a specific place and body; but, on the contrary, the faculty must be free in respect to everything.

Let the supposition which thou hast made receive these corrections.

CONCERNING ORACULAR DREAMS.

Immediately after this, observations are brought forward as of one that was wavering in regard to the nature of divination; yet as they are advanced there is an endeavor apparent to overturn the art entirely. We will, therefore, direct the

discussion to both these conditions of the case. We will begin by first answering the former of them: "That during sleep, when we are not engaged with anything, we sometimes chance to a premonition of the future." It is not suggested that the source of the divination is from out of ourselves and that the one which accompanies it is from without. The two are closely allied together and are intimately interblended with each other. Hence, their operations in respect to these matters are carried out in the manner defined, and follow the causes which precede them, being allied to them in close relations. When, however, the cause is free from such attachments, and preëxists by itself, the end is not marked out in relation to us, but everything depends on influences outside. Now, therefore, it is likely to happen in such cases that the truth in the dreams does not come out in concert without ritual operations, and it often shines forth from itself. This shows that divination, being from the gods without, and endued with authority which is all its own, will, when it pleases, graciously reveal the future. Let these explanations be an answer of such a character.

A PECULIAR CONDITION OF *SOUL* NOT A SOURCE OF DIVINATION.

Afterward, in the endeavor to explain the nature of divination, thou doest away with it altogether. For if, as thou affirmest, "a condition of the soul" constitutes the source of divination, what person of sense will accord to a thing so palpably unstable and capricious foreknowledge that is normal and stable? Or, how can the soul that is discreet and constant as to the better faculties—those of the mind and understanding—be ignorant of what is to be, when the individual that is receptive as to disorderly and turbulent impressions throws the future wide open? For what in the world is peculiar in the passive condition to qualify it for the beholding of the things that possess real being? Why is not this condition a hindrance rather than an aid to the more genuine perception? Further, also, if the things in the world were placed together by means of passive conditions, the similitude of the passive conditions would be in close proximity to them.

But if they are established through principles and through ideas there will be a different nature of foreknowledge, which will be quit of everything like passive condition.

Then, again, the passive condition is conscious only of what is going on and what is now in existence, but foreknowledge extends also to those things which as yet do not have being. Hence, foreknowledge is far different from a passive or susceptible condition.

Let us, however, consider thy arguments for such an opinion as thou hast put forward. Thy statement that "the senses are held in check" tends to the contrary of what thou hast before declared, for it is an evidence that no human phantasm is active at the particular time. But "the fumes which are introduced" are in close relationship to the god, but not to the soul of the Beholder. The "invocations" do not induce an inbreathing into the reasoning faculty or passive conditions of body in the worshipper, for they are perfectly unknowable and arcane; but they are uttered intelligibly to the god alone whom they are invoking. But what thou remarkest, "that by no means everybody, but only the more artless and young are suitable" for the procedures, demonstrates that such as these are more in condition as a receptacle for a spirit that enters from without and holds the subject entranced.

From these things, however, thou dost not conjecture rightly that the enthusiastic rapture is a passive condition; for the evidence follows likewise from these signs and tokens that it flows in from without, as an inbreathing. Let these things, therefore, so be with us.

DISEASE NOT A FACTOR IN DIVINATION.

After these conjectures there follows another, a descent from the entheast aberration to ecstasy or alienation of mind on toward a worse condition. It is declared, most irrationally, that the origin of the divining art is "the mania that occurs in diseases." For it sets forth enthusiasm or divine inspiration as due to melancholia or the redundancy of black bile, the perverted conditions of drunkenness, and the fury incident to rabid dogs. It is necessary from the beginning, there-

fore, to make the distinction of two species of ecstasy or entrancement, of which one causes degeneration to an inferior condition, and fills with imbecility and insanity; but the other imparts benefits that are more precious than intelligence. The former species wanders to a disorderly, discordant and worldly activity; but the latter gives itself to the Supreme Cause which directs the orderly arrangement of things in the world. The former, being destitute of real knowledge, is led aside from good sense; but the latter is united with those superior sources of wisdom that transcend all the sagacity in us. The former is constantly changing, but the latter is unchangeable. The former is contrary to nature, but the latter is superior to nature. The former brings down the soul into lower conditions, but the latter leads it upward. The former places the subject entirely outside of the divine apportionment, but the latter joins, unites him to it.

Why, then, does thy discourse lead off so much from the proposed hypothesis as to be turned from the things superior and beneficial to the worst evils of mania? For in what does the enthusiastic inspiration resemble melancholy or drunkenness or any other form of alienation originating from morbid conditions of the body? What oracle can ever be produced from distempers of the body? Is not a product of such a kind wholly a destruction, but divine possession a perfecting and deliverance of the soul? Does not the worthless trance happen at the same time with debility, but the superior enthusiastic rapture with complete reign? In short, to speak plainly, the latter, being in a tranquil condition as relates to its own life and intelligence, gives itself to be used by another; but the former, operating with its peculiar species, renders them utterly wicked and turbulent.

This difference is therefore the most palpable of all, as all operations by divine beings differ from others. For as the superior orders are completely apart from all the others, their operations are accordingly not like those of any other beings. When, therefore, thou speakest of the aberration of a divine being, let thy conception of it be free from all human "aberrations." And if thou imputest to them "abstinence" simi-

lar to that of the priests, do not look upon human abstinence any more as being similar to it. But of all things, do not compare "diseases of the body, such as suffusions, and fancies set in motion by morbid conditions," with the divine visions. For what have they in common with each other? Neither art thou at liberty to contrast "equivocal states of mind, such as may occur during abstinence and ecstasy," with the sacred visions of the gods, which are defined by a single energy. But on the other hand, thou mayest not associate in mind the spectacles of the gods that are superlatively efficacious with "the apparitions got up by technical magic."* For the latter have neither the energy nor the essence nor the genuineness of the objects that are beheld, but only project bare phantasms that seem real.

All such questions, however, which lead away from the subject and carry the attention from contraries to contraries, we do not consider as touching the hypothesis before us. Hence, having set them forth as foreign to the subject, we do not suppose it to be necessary to waste more time upon them, as they have been set in a disputatious way to lead us to wander from our course, but not with any curiosity of a philosophic character.

CONCERNING SPURIOUS AND GENUINE DIVINATION.

One will wonder, therefore, at the many and different suggestions of new points of argument which are evidently brought forward for the purpose of disputing. He will be astonished, with good reason, at the oppositeness of the opinions that are put forth to explain divining. It is affirmed that the whole art is only a matter of appearances produced by jugglers, there being nothing substantial, and likewise that it is exercised by persons who are impelled by emotion or disease, and are in a condition to dare anything of a delusive nature, and that it is possible for them to come upon the truth by chance. For what principle of truth, or what starting-point of something that may be understood, less or greater, will

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*The goetic art or "black magic."

there exist in these individuals? We should not receive that as the truth, however, which comes in such manner by chances; as that also happens to be recorded of those who are borne along to no purpose. That, however, is not to be acknowledged as the truth in which the things are done in concert with those that are performing them; for these things coëxist with the physical senses and with the perceptive faculties of animals. Hence, that which is done in this way has nothing that is its own, or divine, or superior to what is common in nature.

On the other hand, the truth which is to be regarded stands permanently in the same manner as respects operation. It has perfect knowledge present with it of existing things, and is itself of the same nature with the essence of things. It employs the stable reasoning faculty, and sees everything as existing in its perfectness, its fitness for use, and its dimensions. This truth, therefore, is in close connection with the art of divination. It ought accordingly to be much more than natural presentiment, such as the instinctive perceiving of earthquakes and great storms of rain, which is possessed by certain animals. From this a feeling in common, certain animals being acted upon together, or perceiving more or less accurately, through an acuteness of sense, things which are taking place in the atmosphere above but have not yet been brought to pass upon the earth.*

If, then, these things which we are saying are true, although we may have received from nature a power to ascertain things, or though we feel what is going to take place, that we shall accept this kind of impression as oracular foreknowledge, yet it is similar to divining, except that in divination there is

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*Ancient literature has preserved several incidents of this character. The tenth chapter of the book of "Daniel" throws considerable light upon the subject; and in the fifth chapter of the second book of the "Maccabees," an apparition of an army manœuvering in the sky is described. The newspapers abound with accounts of dreams in which events were represented as they afterward actually occurred. This would seem to indicate that there is a world of reality about us, other than the spectacular region that we contemplate, and that scenes taking place here are copies of what has been enacted there already.

nothing wanting in certainty and truth, while the other is a matter of chance for the most part, but not always; perceiving correctly in regard to certain things but not in relation to all. Hence, if there is any instruction in the arts, as, for example, in pilotage or in medicine, which gives power to forecast the future, it does not pertain in any respect to the divine foreknowledge. For it reckons up what is to happen by probabilities and certain signs, and these not always credible; and they do not have the thing that is thus signified in a proper connection with that of which the signs are indicators. But with the divine foresight of things to be there are, before all, steadfast perception, the unchanging assurance completely at one with the Causes, an indissoluble holding of everything to everything, and a knowledge always abiding of all things as being now present, and their province defined.

DIVINATION NEITHER FROM NATURE, ART NOR FELLOW FEELING.

It is not proper to make this statement: "That the realm of nature, art, and the feeling in common of things throughout the universe as of the parts of one animal, contain foreshadowings of certain things with reference to others"; nor "that the bodies are so constituted as to be forewarnings from some to others." For these things, which are very clearly beheld, remove the traces of the divine oracular power in a greater or less degree. But it is not possible that any one should be bereft of it entirely. On the contrary, as in all things, the image of the good carries the god in it; so, also, a certain likeness of the divine oracular power, obscure or more active, appears to be in them. But none of these is such as the divine form of divination, nor may the one divine, unmingled form of it be characterized from the many phantasms which go down from it into the realm of generated existence. Nor is it proper, if there are any other false or delusive appearances, which are farther removed from genuineness, to bring these forward in the forming of a judgment of the matter. On the contrary, we must think of it as one single utterance, one arrangement, and according to one divine ideal and

one intellectible and unchangeable truth; and in like manner we must regard the change which may be taking place at different times, and in different ways, as denoting instability and discordance, and disrespect for the gods.

If, then, divination is truly a divine work of such a character, who would not be ashamed to attribute it to the agency of nature, that accomplishes its objects without thought, as though it had elaborated in us a power of divining, and had implanted it in a greater degree in some and in a less degree in others? For in those things in which men receive from nature the means for accomplishing their individual undertakings, even in these, certain aptitudes of nature take the lead. In those, however, in which there is no human agency in the inception, neither is the final result our own. And when a certain good, older and superior to our own nature, has been so arranged beforehand, it is not possible that any natural genius or cleverness in these things should have been engaged secretly in the matter. For with these things which are fully perfected there are also those which are imperfectly developed; but both are conditions of human beings. But of these conditions which we do not experience as human beings there will not, ever, be a preparation by nature. Hence, there is no seed of the divine oracular power in us from nature. If, on the contrary, however, any one should make the invocation by a certain more common and human mode of divining, let there be a natural preparation. But in regard to that which may be truly named the divine oracular art, which belongs to the gods, it is not right to think that this is insown from the realm of nature. For, indeed, both the different modes, and the indefinite one, follow more or less with this idea. For this reason this indefinite mode of forecasting stands separate from the divine oracular art which remains in fixed boundaries. Wherefore, if any one says that the art of divination has its being from out of ourselves, it is our duty to fight strenuously against this assertion.

But thou likewise makest this statement: "Examples are manifest by the things done, namely: That they who make the invocations carry stones and herbs, tie sacred knots and

unloose them, open places that are locked, and change the purposes of individuals by whom they are entertained, so that, from being paltry, they are made worthy." All these things signify that the inspiration comes from without. It is necessary, however, not only to accept this beforehand, but also to define thoroughly what a specific inspiration is, which comes from duty, and produces the god-given art of divination. Otherwise, we shall not to fit beforehand, to give judgment on this subject, unless by applying its own peculiar sign to it and fit its own token to it as a seal.

CONCERNING SPECTRAL FIGURES AND MATERIALIZATION.

Thou also puttest forth this declaration: "Those who are able to reproduce the mystic figures (idola) are not to be held in low esteem." I shall wonder if any one of the theurgic priests who behold the genuine ideal forms of the gods should consent to allow them at all. For why should anybody consent to take idola or spectral figures in exchange for those that have real being, and be carried from the very first to the last and lowest? Do we not know that as all things which are brought into view by such a mode of shadowing are but imperfectly discernible, they are really phantoms of what is genuine, and that they appear good to the seeming but never are really so?

Other things are in like manner brought in, being carried along in the course of events, but nothing is rendered that is genuine or complete or distinct. But the mode of producing them is plain, for not God, but man, is the maker of them. Nor are they produced from single and intellectual essences, but from matter taken for the purpose.*

What that is good can come into existence, that germinates from matter and from the powers material and corpo-

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*This process has again appeared in what is known as "materializing." It is explained as the producing of the figure of an individual by surrounding it with material elements procured from the body of another person who is, during the time, in a dormant and inanimate condition.

real which exist with matter and in bodies?* Is not the thing which owes existence to human art more impotent and of less importance than the persons themselves who gave it existence? By what art or skill is this spectral figure put into form? For it is said it is molded as by the skill of Demiurgus himself. But that skill is employed in the producing of genuine essences, never in the forming of mere spectral figures. Hence, the art of producing idola is a long way distant from Demiurgic creating. On the contrary, it does not preserve the analogy with Divine creating at all. For God creates all things, but not through the physical motions of things in the sky or by those of particled matter or by the forces thus divided. But instead, it is by thoughts put into activity, by purposes and non-material ideals, through the sempiternal and supermundane soul, that he constructs the worlds.

But the creator of the spectral figures, it is said, makes them as of the revolving stars. The thing does not have its existence in the way as it is imagined. For as there are unlimited powers possessed by the gods in the sky, the last and lowest of all these is that of the realm of nature. But again, a part of this lowest power takes the lead by itself prior to generated existence, being inherent in the principles which contain the germs of things, and established in the immovable essences. The other part, however, existing in the perceptible and visible motions, and likewise in the auras and qualities from out of the sky, exercises dominion over the whole visible

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*Pythagoras and the philosophers who adopted his views describe matter as the source of evil. This is an Oriental doctrine, and was doubtless carried to the West by teachers sent out for the purpose. The same notions have more or less pervaded opinion ever since, and given rise to the impression that so many seem to entertain that everything physical is intrinsically vile and therefore to be repressed so far as possible. But the sentiment given by Plato in "Theætetos" would seem a more rational conception. "It is not possible that evil shall be destroyed," says Sokrates, "for it is necessary that there should always be something contrary to good. Nor can it be seated among the gods, but of necessity moves round this mortal nature and this region. Wherefore we ought to endeavor to fly hence as quickly as possible. But this flying consists in resembling God as much as possible, and this resembling is the becoming just and holy with wisdom."

order of things, in all which this last in the series rules as a deputed governor over the universal realm of visible existence in the places around the earth. But in the realm of visible existence, and in the qualities of the auras perceptible to the sense which are sent down from the sky, many different arts are brought into use, such as medicine* and gymnastics, and all others that harmonize with nature in their results. And what is more, the creating of spectral figures attracts from the auras a very indistinct portion of generative energy.

Hence, as the truth is so, it is right to make it known: That the individual creating the spectral figures employs in his procedures neither the revolutions of the heavenly bodies nor the powers which exist in them by nature; and, in short, he is not able to come in contact with them. But as he follows the rules of an art, and does not proceed theurgically, he deals with the last and most inferior emanations, manifestly, from their nature, about the extreme part of the universe. But these emanations being partially commingled with matter, I think that they are capable of changing to it, and likewise of taking new form and being modeled differently at different times. They likewise admit change of powers in these particulars from some to others. But such a diversity of energies, and the combination of so many powers pertaining to the realm of matter, are separated not only from everything of divine creation, but also from everything of natural production. For nature performs its own works after one plan, and at once, by simple and uncomplicated operations. The fact remains, accordingly, that such a manner of producing spectral figures by a commingling about the lowest and a manifest celestial inflow, the things being yielded by the celestial nature, is by art.

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*Both Galen and Hippokrates insisted that astral knowledge is essential for physicians; and Galen derided those physicians who denied the necessity for such knowledge. He went so far as to declare medical men who were ignorant of astral learning, homicides. All the medical schools of Christendom and the "Moslem" world formerly taught astrology, and Nicholas Culpepper, in his Herbal, is careful to assign to each medicinal plant its astral relations.

SPECTRAL FIGURES UNSTABLE.

Why, then, it may be asked, does the projector of spectral figures, the man who creates these things, why does he disregard himself, when he is superior, and descended from superior beings? He appears, instead, to be trusting in specters destitute of soul,* only animated with the outward appearance of life, holding together externally a framework of diversified complexion and absolutely ephemeral in duration. Does anything genuine and true exist in them? On the contrary, nothing of the things fashioned by the ingenuity of man is unalloyed and pure. But do simplicity and uniformity of operation of the entire structure predominate in them? They are wanting in all. In regard to their visible composition they are brought together from out of manifold and incompatible substances. But is there a pure and complete power manifest in them? By no means. When any such multitude of auras, accumulated from many sources, has been mingled together, it is shown to be feeble and fleeting. Yet, except these things are as described, is there the stability in the apparitions which they affirm? There ought to be much; but they vanish more quickly than the idola that are seen in mirrors. For when the incense is placed upon the altar the figure is immediately formed from the vapor as it is carried upward, but when the vapor becomes mingled and dispersed into the whole atmosphere the idolon itself is immediately dissolved, and not a trace of it remains. Why, then, should this juggling be desired by the man that loves manifestations that are true? I regard it as worthy of no consideration. If they who make these spectral figures know that these things about which they are engaged are structures formed of passive material the evil would be a simple matter. Besides this, they become in this similar to the apparitions in which they place faith. But if they hold to these spectral figures as to gods, the absurdity will not be utterable in speech or endurable in act. For into such a soul

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*Origen treated of these idola or spectral figures as things in motion, but not beings really alive; apparitions approaching the nature of phantoms.

the divine ray never shines; for it is not in the nature of things for it to be bestowed upon objects that are wholly repugnant, and those that are held fast by dark phantasms have no place for its reception. Suchlike wonder-making with phantasms will, therefore, be in the same category with shadows that are very far from the truth.

NO DIVINE QUALITY IN SPECTRAL FIGURES.

But then thou affirmest further: "They watch the course of the heavenly bodies, and tell from the position and relation of one with another whether the oracular announcements of the ruling planet will be true or false, or whether the rites which have been performed will be to no purpose, or will be expressive or arcane."

To the contrary, not on account of these things will these phantasms possess the divine quality. For the last and most inferior of the things in the realm of generated existence are moved by the courses of the heavenly bodies and are affected by the auras which go forth from them. No, indeed; but if any one shall examine these things carefully they will show the contrary. For how may it be that these things which are so easy to change in every respect, and are turned round in various directions by demons from without, so as to be rendered of no importance, whether as oracular or in regard to promises or in relation to Perfective Rites or in other matters, as the case may be, shall contain in themselves any allotment of divine power, however small? What, then, are the powers which are inherent in various kinds of matter, the elementary constituents, of which demons are formed? Verily, and indeed, they are not. For nothing of divisible sensitive bodies originates demons; but these, instead, are themselves generated and watched over by demons. Neither is anybody able to fashion the shapes of demons as from a machine, but rather, on the contrary, he is himself fashioned and constructed by the demons according as he partakes of a body possessing sensibility.

But neither is there any incidental number of demons generated from the elements of things of sense, but, far otherwise,

the number is itself simple in nature and is uniformly operative around compound natures. Hence, it will not possess things of sense older than itself, or more lasting; but as it excels sensible things in age and power, it imparts to them the constancy which they are able to receive. Perhaps, however, thou termest the idola demons, applying such a designation wrongly; for the nature of demons is one thing and that of the idola another. The rank of each is likewise very widely different. And also, indeed, the Chorus-leader of idola is different from the great prince of the demons.* For this thou givest assent when saying that "no god or demon is drawn down by them." Of what consideration would a sacred observance or a foreknowledge of the future be worthy which is entirely without participation, God or any other superior power? Hence, it is necessary to know what is the nature of this wonder-making art, but by no means to have faith in it.

FALSE AND TRUE DIVINATION.

Again, therefore, thy explanation of religious performances is still worse. It describes "a race of a tricky nature assuming all shapes, artful, and turning many ways, that personates gods and demons, and souls of the dead, like actors on the stage."

In reply to these imputations I will relate to thee what I once heard from the prophets of the Chaldæans.

The gods of truth, whoever they may be, are alone the bestowers of all things good. They consort with only good men; they are in intimate union with those who have been purified by the sacred discipline, and extirpate from them every bad quality and disorderly passion. When they shine upon these, then what is evil and demonian gives way, and disappears from the presence of the superior beings as darkness vanishes before the light. Nor does the light by any chance cause any annoyance to the theurgic priests, and they receive from it

*It may perhaps be well to remark that the prince of demons here named is probably not the same personification as Beel Zebul of the Gospels. That personage is styled in the Greek Testament, Baal Zeboul, the lord of the house; and in astrology it will be borne in mind that every one of the planetary houses had its own chief.

every excellent quality of mind, are made perfect as worthy and decorous, are set free from disorderly passions, and purified from all irregular impulse. and likewise from godless and profane habitudes.

But those who are themselves impious wrongdoers, and who assail divine matters in lawless and disorderly ways, are not able, because of defective individual energy and lack of inherent power, to obtain intimate association with the gods. If, by reason of any contaminations, they are debarred from being with immaculate spirits, they become allied with wicked spirits, and are filled by them with the most pernicious inspiration. They become evil and profane, full of unbridled desires after pleasure, replete with badness, and likewise eager admirers of modes of life that are foreign to the nature of the gods; and, to speak briefly, they become like the evil demons with whom they are now joined in their nature. These, then, being full of disorderly passion and badness, through their common nature attract the evil spirits to themselves and are themselves incited by them to every kind of wickedness. They grow together like beings of the same birth, as in a circle, joining the beginning with the end and returning in the other direction in like manner.

These things are sacrilegious misdeeds, full of impiety. They have been brought into the Sacred Rites irregularly, and their observance attempted in a disorderly manner by those who have come later.* At one time, as it seems, one god would be caused to be present instead of another at the *komos*, or mystic revel, and at another they would introduce evil demons instead of gods, calling them rival gods. Never, when discoursing about Sacerdotal Divination, set forth these things as examples. For Goodness is certainly more opposed to intrinsic badness than those to that which is simply not good.

As, therefore, the profaners of temples fight against the religious service of the gods most of all, so also those who have

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*It was usual at the Eleusinian Initiations, and others, to have a minor observance for those who did not reach the temple soon enough for the regular proceedings. Probably irregularities might occur on such occasions, but had to be guarded against.

to do with demons that lead astray and are causes of excess undoubtedly take the lead in fighting against theurgists themselves. For not only is every evil spirit driven away by them, and is utterly overthrown, but every species of badness and every disorderly passion made an end of altogether. On the other hand, there is a free participation of benefits among the pure; they are filled from above from the fire of truth, and they have no "impediment" or hindrance to the good things of the soul from bad spirits. Nor does there any arrogance or adulation or enjoyment of exhalations or force of violence greatly annoy them. On the contrary, all these, as though struck by a bolt of lightning, give way, and fall back without touching—not able even to approach them.

This kind of divination is immaculate and sacerdotal, and is likewise truly divine. It does not, as thou remarkest, require an umpire, whether me or some one else, in order that I may distinguish it out of many. On the contrary, it is itself distinct from them all, superior above them, sempiternal, preëxistent, not admitting any parallel nor the arranging of any superiority in many respects, but is free by itself, and takes the lead in a single form over all. To this it is necessary that thou, and every one that is a genuine lover of the gods, should give himself wholly; for by such means, truth, which gives a good foothold, is obtained at once in divinations, and perfect excellence in souls, and with both these the way upward will be granted to the theurgists to the Intellectual Fire, which is placed before as the end of all knowledge and of every theurgic transaction.

To no purpose, therefore, thou bringest forward the notion which some entertain: That divination is the work of an evil demon. For the notion is not worthy to be remembered in the speculations respecting the gods. At the same time, also, these individuals are ignorant of the difference between truth and falsehood, because they have been reared in darkness from the beginning, and likewise are not able to discern the principles from which these things are derived.

With these conclusions, therefore, let us bring to a close these explanations in respect to the nature of Divination.

X

CONCERNING THE POWERS INVOKED

PART IV

THE INVOCATION OF THE THEURGIC RITES

CHAPTER X

CONCERNING THE POWERS INVOKED

Come, then, let us look over the opposing propositions in their order, what they are, and what reason there is for them. And if we let ourselves go on a little more at length in regard to some, as though speaking indeed by particular authority and at our own convenience, thou shouldst wait and bear with us patiently. For in regard to the Supreme Sciences, if thou wouldst know them perfectly, it is necessary that great diligence shall be observed and likewise that they shall be investigated for a long time with rigorous exactness. Thou wilt, therefore, according to the present plan, as thou hast begun, put forward the questions at issue which constitute the topics for discussion, and I in my turn will give thee an answer.

Accordingly, thou sayest: "It perplexes me greatly to form a conception how they who are invoked as superior beings are likewise commanded like inferiors."

I will tell thee in reply the whole distinction in regard to the beings that are invoked that is worthy of a word; from

which thou wilt have an intelligible explanation as to what may be and what may not be, in regard to the matters of which thou art asking. For the gods, the beings superior to us, by a purposing of the things that are beautiful, and likewise by an ungrudging affluence of benefits, bestow cordially the things that are suitable upon those who are worthy, compassionating the labors of the men in the Sacred office, but loving their children, their nurslings and pupils.

The intermediary races,* however, are the ephors or directors of decision. They likewise advise what it is necessary to do and what it is well to desist from. They also help to just actions, but hinder from those that are unjust, and they likewise cause many who are endeavoring to despoil others unjustly, or to ill-treat or destroy some one, to undergo the same things which they are designing to perform to others.

There is, moreover, a certain other race of demons present, irrational and destitute of judgment, to which has been allotted only a single faculty in the series, by the distribution to each of the function which has been arranged among the several divisions. As, therefore, it is the function of the sword to cut and to do nothing else than this, so also of the spirits distributed everywhere according to the differentiating necessity of the realm of nature, one class divides and another collects the things that come into existence. This, however, is well known from the manifestations. For the Charoneian cavities,† as they are called, send forth a spirit or exhalation from their recesses, which is capable of destroying everything indiscriminately that happens to be there.

So, therefore, certain invisible spirits, each having by allotment a different function, are constituted to perform that

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*Proklos enumerates three classes of the demons: the more spiritual, the more rational, and the more unreasoning. The guides of Sokrates and Plotinos were of the second of these. They are here described.

†Charoneia is a district in Asia Minor, bordering on the river Meander. The name is from Charon, the supposed ferryman of disbodied souls across the river Styx in the Underworld. The caves, or, rather, little openings in the ground, emitted a sulphurous vapor, sometimes destructive to life. Pliny also mentions similar cavities at Italy, near Puteoli. They were supposed to lead to the realm of Hades.

office only as it has been arranged. If, then, any one shall undertake to celebrate the Perfective Rites in proper order, and shall change them in another direction, and do something contrary to prescribed custom, there will be a particular injury for making use of the Sacred Rites in an unlawful manner. This is a topic, however, foreign to our discourse.

WHY SPIRITS ARE COMMANDED

What, however, it is now proposed to investigate we sometimes behold as it takes place. For it happens in regard to the spirits that do not make use of a rational faculty of their own and have no principle of judgment, that they are commanded; and this is not unreasonable. For our understanding, being naturally endowed to reason and decide, in the same way as it has charge of affairs, and likewise comprehending many of the forces of life in itself, is accustomed to dominate the most irrational and those that have only a single energy complete. Hence it calls upon them as superior beings, because it is endeavoring to draw from the whole cosmic world that encompasses us the things which perfect us entirely in respect to the matters that are held among divisible things. But it commands them imperatively as inferiors,* because certain parts (of our nature while) in the world frequently are more pure and more perfect than (faculties) that extend to the whole cosmos; as, for example, if one is spiritual and intellectible and the other is wholly non-spiritual or belonging to the sphere of nature; for then the one that is less extended and developed is superior in authority to the one that is developed more amply, although it may be surpassed by the latter in the magnitude and extent of dominion.

There is, however, also another reason to be applied to these things, namely: There is a twofold prelude to the whole theurgic performance. The former, which is introduced as by human beings, which conserves our rank in the universe as it exists in the sphere of nature; and the latter, which is con-

*These irrational spirits, so far as they contribute to perfecting individuals, are superior to us, though because of their irrationality they are inferior.

firmed by divine tokens, exalted on high through being allied to the superior beings, and likewise led harmoniously after their beautiful order, which may also in all likelihood be invested with the external form of the gods. In accordance, therefore, with the difference of such a kind, the officiator very properly invokes the powers from everywhere as superior beings, in so far as the invoker is a human being, and in turn commands them as subordinate; since through the arcane symbols he is in a manner encompassed with the sacred dignity of the gods.

SUGGESTIONS IN REGARD TO INVOCATIONS

Yet in order to resolve the doubts of these things still more truly, we think it well, when making the invocations, to omit the supplications which appear to be directed to them as to human beings, and also the imperative expressions which are uttered with great force during the celebrating of the Rites. For if the communion of a harmonious friendship and an indissoluble combining together as being only one comprise the sacred work, nothing of achievements called human joins with it, to the end that it shall be truly of the gods and superior to human beings. Nor should the invocation be in such a manner as when we endeavor to bring distant objects to us, nor the supplication of the form addressed to beings separate and apart in such a manner as we pass something from one to another. But energy of the divine Fire itself shines forth spontaneously in all directions, and being both self-called and self-operating, is active in like manner through all things, those alike that impart and those that can receive it.

The explanation which is now made is far superior, which does not assume that divine operations are accomplished by means of contrary or different natures, as things of nature are wont to be effected; but, instead, that every work is rightly accomplished through sameness, oneness and conformity of nature. If, then, we should make a distinction between the invoker and the invoked, the commander and the one commanded, the superior and the inferior, we should in

some way transfer the contrariety of sex that is peculiar to generated beings to the unbegotten blessed natures of the gods. If, then, as is right, we disregard all these matters as being earth-born, but assign as being more precious that which is common and simple to the beings that are superior to the diversified conditions existing here, the first thing assumed by these questions will be at once completely answered, so that there will not be a single reasonable point of controversy left in regard to them.

KARMA OR ILLS FROM FORMER LIVES

What shall we say, then, in regard to the question, after the one just answered: "Why do the divinities that are invoked require the worshiper to be just, although they themselves when entreated consent to perform unjust acts?"

In reply to this I am uncertain in respect to what is meant by "performing unjust acts," as the same definition may not appear right both to us and to the gods. We, on the one hand, looking to that which is least significant, consider the things that are present, the momentary life, what it is and how it originates. The beings superior to us, let me say, know for certain the whole life of the soul and all its former lives; and if they bring on a retribution from the supplication of those who invoke them, they do not increase it beyond what is just. On the contrary, they aim at the sins impressed upon the soul in former lifetimes, which men, not perceiving, imagine that it is unjust that they shall fall into the misfortunes which they suffer.

The many are also generally accustomed to propose the same doubt in regard to Providence; that certain persons are suffering from wrong-doing, who had not wronged any one previously. For they are unable here to reason as to what the soul is, what its entire life has been, the magnitude of its great errors in former lives, and whether it is now suffering these things for what it did formerly. Then also there are many unjust acts which elude human cognizance, but which are well known to the gods, since the same view of justice is not maintained by mankind generally. On the contrary, men

define justice as the independent action of the Soul and the assigning of merit according to the established laws and the ruling conditions of civic life. The gods, I assure you, give their judgment of whatever is just, looking to the whole orderly arrangement of the world, and to the joint relation of the souls with the gods. Hence the judgment of what actions are right is different with the gods from what it is with us. We cannot wonder at this, if we do not in most matters arrive at the high and absolutely perfect judgment which is exercised by the superior beings. But what hinders justice to every one individually and with the whole family of souls, especially in a much superior manner from being as would be approved of the gods? For if a sharing of the same nature by souls when they are in bodies and when they are apart from bodies effects an intimate alliance to the common life and order of the world, it is also necessary that the payment of the requirements of justice shall be demanded to the uttermost, and especially when the magnitude of the wrongs done by the one soul in former terms of existence exceeds the fullest extent of the single punishment following upon the offenses.

If, however, any one should add other explanations, by which he seeks to make plain in a different way the maintaining of justice by the gods, or as it is determined by us, there may result from them a way for us in regard to the matters under consideration. But for me the rules alone which have been already laid down are sufficient for the purpose of manifesting generally the race of superior beings, and including everything in relation to the healing influence in the punishments.

GOOD ONLY IS FROM THE GODS

In order, therefore, that we may from our abundance decide the contest against the assumption now under discussion, we will, if agreeable to thee, consider as granted the contrary of what we have argued, namely, that unjust things are performed in the proceedings, the invocations. It is evident at once, therefore, that the gods are not to be accused of these things. For they who are good are causes and authors of

good things; and the gods are good in their very essence. They accordingly do nothing unjust; hence it is necessary to seek for other causes of the things which occur discordantly. But even though we are not able to find these, we ought not to throw away the true concept in relation to the gods (that they are the causes only of what is just); nor should we, because of controversy as to whether things occur and how they occur, reject notions in regard to the gods that are really clear. For it is much better to confess the feebleness of our powers that are unable to understand how unjust acts are perpetuated, than to concede an impossible falsehood in respect to the gods, concerning which all the Greek philosophers, and likewise the foreign peoples, rightly entertain the contrary opinion. So, then, this is the truth.

EVIL DEMONS AT THE INITIATIONS

Nevertheless, it is necessary to add also the causes by which evils sometimes come into existence, and likewise how numerous and of what kind they are. For their form is not simple,* and being diversified it takes the lead in the bringing of a variety of evils into existence. For if we spoke truly just now in regard to the mystic figures and the evil demons, that after the manner of actors in a play assume to be present in the character of gods and good demons, there appears in some manner a malignant tribe rushing in a numerous body, and with these the discrepancy which thou hast described usually happens. For the demons require the worshiper to be just, because they themselves as actors in the drama are assuming to be, as if of the race of the gods, whereas they are servants to injustice because they are in their nature evil.

Let there be, therefore, the same statement in regard to false and true, and of good and evil. In the divinations we attribute truth to the gods only, and when falsehood is detected impute it to another race as the cause, that of the demons. So also in regard to matters just and unjust; that what is beautiful and right is to be ascribed only to the gods and good demons, while the demons who are evil by nature

*Real being, only is simple and unique: evil is always complex.

do the things that are unjust and dishonorable. That which is in all respects in harmony with itself, and is always in the same manner in itself and with itself, pertains to the superior beings; but that which is contradictory, discordant and never the same, is the peculiarity of the dissensions of the demons. Hence it is no matter of wonder in regard to them if violent conflicts exist. Indeed, it would be more wonderful if this should not be the case.

CO-OPERATION OF PARTS IN THE UNIVERSE

Hurrying out from another line of argument, we assume that the several parts of the body of the universe are not inert or destitute of power. On the contrary, so far as they excel our conditions in perfection, beauty and magnitude by so much we insist that the greater power is present with them. They are themselves capable of different things individually by themselves, and they employ diverse energies; but they can accomplish much more in a certain degree acting with one another. Indeed, there is a certain creative activity of various kinds extending from the whole universe into the parts either from sympathy through similarity of powers, or from the adaptation of the active to the passive principle.

If, therefore, there happen by corporeal necessities, any mischievous and destructive results to parts, yet they are salutary and beneficial as regards the whole and the entire framework. But they bring on a necessary decay to the parts, either from not being able to conduct the operations of the whole; or secondly, from a commingling and combining of the infirmities existing from themselves; or thirdly, from the want of harmony of the parts with one another.

MANY THINGS ORIGINATE SPONTANEOUSLY

Next in course after the body of the Universe, there are many things coming into existence from its productive principle.* For the harmonious union of the things that are of

*The φύσις (phusis), or nature, is here indicated as the maternal function of the world, by which the multiplicity of created things are brought forth into existence.

like nature, and the repulsion of those that are unlike, produce not a few. Moreover, the joining of the many is one, the Living Principle of the Universe,* and the forces in the world, however many and of whatever kind they may be, bring to perfection, to speak in plain terms, one thing in respect to the whole, but another in respect to the parts, owing to the relative feebleness of the parts when they are separate; just as Attraction, Love and Repulsion,† which are present in the universe as energy, become passive conditions in those that participate individually, taking the lead in ideals and pure principles in the nature of wholes,‡ they share in a certain deficiency and unshapeliness which are incident to matter in regard to things of a divisible quality. In respect to wholes, they are united, but in regard to parts they are at variance. Thus do differentiated natures that participate in these imperfections in conjunction with matter deteriorate in regard to everything that is good, perfect and universal. Sometimes they decay in parts in order that the entire natures which are compacted firmly together may be preserved. Sometimes, also, the parts are tormented and weighed down, while the natures that are entire remain insensible to such molestation.

DIVINITY NOT THE AUTHOR OF WRONG

Let us, therefore, bring together the results from these conclusions. For if some of those who make the invocations (at the Rites) employ the natural or corporeal powers of the universe, the gift comes of energy unpremeditated and without evil. Indeed, it is the one using the gift improperly who

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*The Anima Mundi, or Soul of the world.

†Greek, *φιλιά, ἔφως, νεῖκος.* The ancient verse repeated this statement as follows:

"The race of Immortals was not till Eros mingled all together:
But when the elements were mixed with one another,
Heaven was produced, the ocean and earth and the imperishable race of the blessed gods."

‡"Wholes" being complete are undivided into parts, but complete in every respect.

diverts it to contrary and useless purposes; and then it is joined in a contrary manner sympathetically to passive conditions through similarity of nature, but he draws the gift directly contrary to the right toward what is evil and base. He also makes the things that are farthest apart to operate together according to the one established order of the world. Yet if any one, perceiving this, should endeavor improperly to attract certain parts of the universe to other parts, they will not be the cause of that mischief; but, on the contrary, it will be the temerity of human beings, and the violation of order in the world, that pervert the things that are good and lawful.

Hence, therefore, the things that are considered to be wicked the gods do not perform, but, on the contrary, the natures that are beneath them are the causes of them, and likewise the bodies. Nor do these, as is supposed, impart from themselves anything of a faulty character; but they send down instead, for the safety of all, their own auras to those races that are allotted to the earth,* and those who receive these emanations change them by their own commingling and modifying and transfer what had been given for one purpose to others widely different.

From all these things, therefore, it is shown that the divinity is in no sense a source of evils and wrongs.

CONTINENCE

Moreover, thou askest, and at the same time hintest a doubt with this question: "They (the gods) will not hearken to the person who is invoking them, if he is not pure from sexual contamination. Yet they do not themselves hesitate to lead chance individuals into unlawful sexual relations."

Whether there are occurrences that take place outside of human laws, but according to another and higher source and order than the laws; or whether occurrences of this kind happen, and according to an agreement and affection in the world, but yet in part through some commingling sympathy; or whether the gift of beauty which was graciously imparted is perverted by those who receive it to that which is the op-

*The "archons" of the lower earthly class.

posite, there is, nevertheless, a clear solution from the things that have been said before.

SOURCES OF INCONTINENCE

Of a truth it is not necessary to examine separately in regard to these same things, and how they occur and what reason there is for them. We must bear in mind that "the whole universe is a single living being," and the parts in it are separated by spaces, but with one nature, and are desirous to be with one another.* The whole impulse for coming together and the cause of commingling attract the parts spontaneously to an intimate union. It is also possible, however, for this to be excited by artificial means, and likewise to be increased beyond what is becoming.

The cause itself, therefore, considered by itself alone, extending from itself about the whole world, is both good and a source of completeness, and also of communion, conjunction and harmonious adaptation, and with the union it also introduces the indissoluble principle of Love which retains and preserves both the things that are and the things that come into existence. But in the parts (the incomplete natures) it occurs that by reason of their separateness from each other and from the perfect natures, and likewise because they are incomplete, deficient and weak in their own nature, there is a connection effected through the passive condition. On this account there are innate desire and appetite inherent in the principal number of them.

In Art, therefore, observing that this innate desire is thus implanted by Nature and distributed through her domain, and being itself distributed over the realm of nature in many forms, attracts it and leads it on. That which in itself is arranged in order, it brings into disorder, and that which is beautiful it fills with ideals of corresponding disfigurement. The Sacred Purpose in them all which is by nature that on

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**Plotinos: Ennead* IV, iv, 32. "This all is one and as a single living being. Being a living being and completely one, there is nothing in it so distant in space as not to be near to the peculiar nature of the one living being through common sympathy."

union it changes to an unseemly complement of a different character, a bringing together of diverse things in some way according to a common passive condition. It likewise gives forth a material from itself which is adverse to the entire creation of what is beautiful, either not receiving beauty at all, or changing it to something else. It likewise mingles with many different forces of the realm of nature, from which it directs as it pleases the comminglings incident to the sphere of creation.*

We show, therefore, from every side that such argument for sexual connections comes from a technique or art of human origin, but is never from any necessity demonian or divine.

INCONTINENCE PROMPTED FROM EVIL DEMONS

Consider, therefore, a class of causes of a different kind: that somehow a stone or plant has frequently a destroying quality derived from them, or one that collects together those which are productive. For it is not by any means in respect to these things alone, but also in respect to greater natures or in greater things that this natural superiority exists, which they who are unable to examine, reflect upon and determine, may easily attribute to the superior operations of nature. Already, moreover, it may be conceded that in the realm of generated existence, in respect to human affairs and in matters generally about the earth, the tribe of evil demons is able to hold superior dominion. What wonder is it, then, if such a race performs such works? For every man may not be able to discriminate which is the good and which the evil selfhood, or by what tokens they may be distinguished from one another. Indeed, those who are not able to perceive the distinction come to conclusions absurdly concerning the en-

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*"The Magic Art (white magic) is regarded by the Greeks as an agency of great power. They declare it to be actually the very extreme of the Sacred Knowledge. For it searches out everything under the moon, its nature, virtue and quality: I mean the elements and their component parts, being animals, plants of all kinds and their fruits, stones and herbs: and in short, everything with its substance and power. Hence, therefore, it works out results of itself: it employs schemes of every kind, images promotive of health."

quiry in regard to the cause of these agencies and refer it to the races superior to the realm of nature and to the order of demons. But even though powers of the particled* soul are comprehended in respect to these things as to their accomplishment, both while it holds to the body and when it has left the oyster-like and earthly corporeality,† but yet wanders below around the places of creation in a disturbed and melting spirit—nevertheless the same opinion would be true; but it places the cause far away from the superior beings. By no means, therefore, does the divine nature nor a good demon minister to the unlawful desires of human beings in regard to sexual matters, since there are many other causes of these.

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*The human soul is particled, divided not only by qualities but also by being partly included in the category and influence of the body while the nobler part is still in a manner a denizen of the Eternal Region. Hence the declaration of Paul to the Corinthian believers: "We know that though our earthly house of this tabernacle should be dissolved, we have a divine building, a house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens."

†*Plato: Phædros*—"This which we now carry with us and call 'the body,' fastened to it like an oyster to its shell."

XI

SACRIFICES AND PRAYERS

PART V

SACRIFICES AND PRAYERS

CHAPTER XI

THE QUESTION STATED

The subject, therefore, concerning which thou makest thy next enquiry, is a common theme of discussion with everybody, both those who are proficient in the sacred learning and those less skilled in such matters. I am speaking in regard to Sacrifices: *"What utility or power they possess in the world and with the gods, and for what reason they are performed appropriate for the beings thus honored, and advantageously for the persons who present the gifts."*

There is also added in the same connection another opposing remark: *"The gods also require that interpreters of the oracles observe strict abstinence from animal substances, in order that they may not be made impure by the fumes from the bodies, yet they themselves are allured most of all by the fumes of the sacrifices of animals."*

NO ACTUAL CONFLICT AS SUGGESTED

It is easy enough, therefore, for any one to dispose of the conflict which thou suggestest. He has simply to point out the excellence of wholes as compared to the incomplete natures and to call attention to the absolute superiority of the gods to human beings. What I now affirm is the following theorem: That for the Universal Soul to preside over the world-body of the Universe and for the gods of the sky to take the celestial body (or sphere) for a vehicle, is neither injurious as a receptacle of passions nor an impediment to the conceptions of mind, but that for the imperfect soul to be in partnership with

a body is unprofitable in both these respects.* Suppose, then, this being perceived, some difficult problem is suggested, like this, for example: That if the body is a fetter to our soul, it will also be a fetter to the soul of the universe; and if the imperfect soul is turned to the body with reference to generation, so also the world-soul will be affected in like manner. Any one may reply to this by declaring that such an objection does not regard the superiority of the higher races to human beings and of the wholes to parts. As, therefore, the converse propositions relate to matters diverse from each other, they do not in any way constitute matters for dispute.

IN REGARD TO SACRIFICED ANIMALS

Here, therefore, the same reasoning is enough. With us the enjoyment incident to bodies conjoined with the soul imparts dullness of mind and actual defilement, and likewise engenders voluptuousness and produces many different maladies of the soul.† In the case, however, of the gods, and of the creators (causes) of the universe and all things, however, the exhalation from the victims going up in a manner proper in religious rites, and likewise encompassed and not encompassing, and itself joined to the all, but in no sense joining the universe and the gods with itself, is itself adapted to the superior races and the universal causes, but never restrains them or adapts them to itself.

DIVINITIES OF THE SKY NOT AFFECTED BY EXHALATIONS

For if the matter is rightly understood, there is by no means any difficulty like that which suggests itself to thee and about which thou contendest *in relation to Abstinence*

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*Stobæos has preserved the following fragment by Iamblikhos, setting forth the same concept: "All souls do not have the same common relation to bodies, but the Universal Soul, as it seemed to Plotinos, issues forth by itself and comprises the body in itself, but it does not couple with the body nor is it encompassed by it. Imperfect souls (such as human beings are endowed with), however, come to the bodies and are born with them."

†Androkydes, the Pythagorean, says: "Wine and the enjoyments of flesh make the body vigorous, but the soul more sluggish."

from Animal Food. For they who conduct the worship of the gods do not abstain from animal food in order that the gods may not be defiled by the fumes from the animals. For what exhalation from the bodies will come near the beings who, before anything material reaches them by any possibility, put matter away from touching them? Not because their power removes everything that causes the bodies to disappear without coming near them; but on the contrary the celestial body (the planet) is unmingled with all material constituents.* It does not receive anything into itself from without, and it does not give forth any particle from itself to things foreign to it. How, then, can any earthly vapor which does not rise five stadia (six hundred feet) from the earth, before it sinks down to it again, come near the sky, or nourish the revolving and non-material body, or, in short, produce in it any defilement or other condition? For it is acknowledged that the ætherial body is outside of every contrary influence, and likewise that it is free from all change; that it is entirely pure from every possibility of being transformed into something else, and, besides this, is utterly without any impulse toward the center or from the center. Hence it is stationary in one place, or it revolves in an orbit. There is not, therefore, any common nature, or power, or exhalation of the bodies which consist of different forces and motions, that are variously modified, moving upward or downward, which may become mingled with the bodies in the sky. Because, therefore, these essences are entirely separate and diverse from them, they effect nothing in regard to them. These, being unbegotten, cannot undergo any change in themselves from those that are generated and subject to change. How, then, may the essence of the divine beings be defiled from such fumes when, as we may say, they put quickly away at a single impulse the vapors from all matter and bodies composed of matter?

It is not proper, therefore, to conjecture this; but rather to reflect that things which are distributed into parts can have

*Proklos describes a celestial body or planet as containing the highest principles of the elements and as characterized by vivific unburning fire; in other words, a vitalized principle extended.

a certain relation to each other, actively or passively, the material to the non-material, and, in short, like natures to like natures. Those, however, that are of another essence, and such as are entirely superior, and which likewise are endowed with other natures and faculties, are not capable of such things as acting upon others or receiving anything from others. The defilement proceeds, therefore, from material objects to those that are held by a material body. It is necessary, accordingly, for those to be purified from these things who are likely to be contaminated from matter. They, however, who are completely free from a divisible nature, who are entirely without the power of receiving conditions from matter into themselves, how can they become contaminated by material things? How can the divine nature, which is preëxistent and superior to human infirmity, and has nothing in common with us, be affected from my emotions or those of any other human being?

Neither of these, accordingly, makes any difference to the gods. No matter is it that we are endowed with bodies from the sphere of matter, for there is nothing, in short, of this with them; and, as they are entirely pure and unmingled essences, they are not defiled from our stains, nor is it of any consequence if material exhalations of bodies are given off around the earth, for these are the farthest remote from their essence and powers. Hence if there exists no part of it in respect to the gods, the whole hypothesis of contrariety (which has been put forth) is completely destroyed. For how may that which is absolutely non-existent (without an external substance) have any conflict in itself? By vainly conjecturing such things, so absurd and unworthy of gods, thou bringest up questions which may not reasonably be adduced in respect to good men. For no man possessing intelligence and undisturbed by passion—much less one of the superior races—would ever be allured by the exhalations of vapors from a sacrifice.

These things, however, will be made the topic of discourse a little later. But for the present the notion of contrariety of nature, having been controverted by many refutations, we

will leave off reasoning in respect to the first topic of discussion.

CONCERNING THE SACRIFICES

But the question is more important, and relates to things of greater consequence. How will I be able to answer thee briefly and fully what is difficult and requires a long explanation? I will attempt to reply, nevertheless, and will not be backward in zeal for promptness. I will also endeavor to follow the points which thou hast concisely indicated and go onward to some of special significance.

I will accordingly set forth to thee, so far as I may, the dogma *Concerning Sacrifices;* that it is by no means to offer them for the sake of honor along in the same way that we honor benefactors; nor for the sake of grateful acknowledging of benefits which the gods have bestowed upon us; nor yet as a first-fruit or gift by way of recompense for older gifts which the gods have made to us. For these are things common also to mankind, and are likewise received from the common administration; but they by no means establish beyond question the supremacy of the gods and their rank as specific causes.

EFFICACY OF SACRIFICES ON SACRED RITES

That, however, which is of the greatest importance should now be considered. I mean, the efficacy of the Sacrifices, why they effect so much. But for them there would come neither cessations from pestilence, nor from famines, nor from unproductive seasons; neither would there be showers of rain, nor the things which are more precious than these, such as conduce to purification of the soul, or to perfection,* or to

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*The Magians and Theurgic priests entertained the notion that it was not in reason for the soul to be made pure by corporeal sacrifices, but Porphyry is said to have conceded that the inferior part of the soul, the "moral soul," might be thereby purified to a certain degree, though not sufficiently for it to attain immortality. The "teleôsis" here spoken of was understood by Proklos to consist in the union of the soul to the Divine Father, by means of the "perfective rite" or initiation: but Porphyry affirmed, as Augustine declared, that those who were thus purified, did not return to the Father or Supreme Divinity, but dwelt above the äerial region among the gods of the æther.

liberation from the conditions of generated existence. Indeed, such modes of sacrificing do not exhibit these results at all. Hence, therefore, as they do not set forth properly in these rites the divine cause of the performances, we cannot justly approve of them. But if they are to be approved at all, it will be only after a secondary manner and as being dependent upon the primary and most ancient divine causes.

THE DIVINITIES SUPERIOR TO THE REALM OF NATURE

The matter under consideration requires, therefore, that we shall set forth the principle according to which the sacrifices are adapted to the events, and have relation to the gods that are the causes precedent to the things that take place. Suppose, then, we may say that by having one life everywhere, the same in the whole universe as in a single living being, there is a participation of similar forces, or a repulsion of opposing ones, or a certain affinity of the active to the passive, which moves the things that are similar and in affinity at the same time, operating in them in like manner by one common sympathy and existing in the most distant as in the nearest. There is then something thus stated of things that are true, and that of necessity belong with the sacrifices. Yet the true purpose of the sacrifices is not thereby shown. For the essence of the gods is in no way dependent upon the realm of nature and upon natural necessities, so as to be aroused by natural passions or by the forces which extend through all the realm of nature. On the other hand it is established by itself outside of these, having nothing in common with them—neither according to essence, nor according to power, nor according to any other thing whatever.

XII

NOTIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN PRIESTS CRITICIZED

CHAPTER XII

NOTIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN PRIESTS CRITICIZED

The same absurdities occur, however, if any of these things are considered as causes of what is effected at the Sacred Rites, namely: Certain numbers that are still regarded among us, as in regard to the crocodile, sixty as akin to the Sun;* or terms expressive of natural objects, as the powers and energies of animals, such as the dog, the baboon, the field-mouse, which are assigned to the Moon,† or material forms, such as are beheld in the sacred animals, according to the

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*The Pythagoreans, who are supposed to have adopted their principal philosophic notions from Egypt, attached special honor to certain numbers and geometric figures. Plutarch affirms that they designated these as divinities, calling the equilateral triangle Athena or Wisdom; the unit, Apollo, as denoting "not many" (a-pollôn); the duad or two, courage and conflict; the triad, justice; and the four, the universe; and also thirty-six as being the sum of the first four odd and the first four even numbers (36). The crocodile was described as producing sixty eggs and occupying sixty days in their hatching. It was venerated anciently in the country of the Fayum in Middle Egypt, and was the Symbol of Râ, the Sun-God, and also of Osiris, as the Sun-God of Amenti, the region of the dead.

†The goddess Isis, the sister and consort of Osiris, the Egyptian Bacchus, was sometimes considered to represent the Moon. When seeking for the body of her murdered husband, a dog was said to have accompanied her. A dog is also included in the Parsi ceremonies. Anubis, who was symbolized by the dog and the dog-headed baboon, was always commemorated in the Secret Rites. The male baboon is melancholy when the moon is hidden, and the female exhibits peculiarities common to women.

colors and shapes of the body;* or some other of the animals in relation to their bodies, or whatever else may be brought into notice; or an organ, like the heart of the cock,† or other things of similar character, which are regarded in respect to the world of nature as causes of successful results in the Sacrifices. For not one of the gods is shown from these things to be the cause beyond the realm of nature; nor is he as such set in activity by the sacrifices. But as a natural cause held fast by matter and physically encompassed by the bodies it is aroused by them, and put to rest again. Indeed, these things are essentials in the region of nature. If, then, anything of such a character is at the Sacred Rites, it accompanies them as a joint cause and as having the consideration of being indispensable, and in this way it is allied to the anterior causes.

THREE GRADES OF ARCHETYPES

It is better, therefore, to assign as the cause of efficacy an attraction and affinity, and likewise an inter-relation such as allies workmen to the things which they have wrought and parents to offspring. When, therefore, this common principle being the anterior cause, we take some animal or thing growing upon the earth that has preserved the purpose of the Creator intact and pure, then through such an object, we

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*Sacred animals were numerous in Egypt, every nome or district having its own. The bulls Apis and Men were selected for their color and peculiarities of body. There were also the sacred bat, ram, cat, river-horse, wolf, serpent, hawk, ibis, etc. They were considered as representing qualities indicative of soul, emotion and moral sense, qualities produced by nature and Divinity. "We worship God through them," says Plutarch.

† The cock was anciently venerated in many countries as sacred to the Sun and at the sacrifices it was customary for the divines to inspect his heart for auguries. Porphyry has recorded similar facts in relation to the heart of the crow, the mole and the hawk. Indeed, every ancient people had its sacred bird. The eagle and the cock seem to have continued to modern time, and even with peoples where the primitive mystic purport is not known.

deal familiarly with the Demiurgic Cause which is over it unmingled with anything else.

These causes (or categories), however, are numerous. Some of them, as, for example, the demonian, are closely joined together; and others, for instance the divine, are ranked after a manner higher than these; and then still beyond there is their Leader, the One Most Ancient Cause. All the categories act together at the perfect Sacrifice.* Every one is adapted to it generally according to the rank which is possessed.

If, however, any sacrifice chances to be defective, it goes forward to a certain extent, but it is not possible to go still further. Hence many think that sacrifices are to be presented to the beneficent demons; many to the final powers of the gods; and many to the pericosmian or to the terrestrial† powers of demons or of divinities. These things, being a part in regard to the sacrifices, are not told guilefully, but they by no means afford us a view of the whole of the virtue of the rite and all the benefits and the divineness which extends through all.

DEMONS AND NOT GODS INFLUENCED BY SACRIFICES

We admit, then, all these statements.‡ We say that the beings that belong to the realm of nature act in concert together according to convenience, or sympathy, or antipathy;

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*This appears to be a conceding that the Supreme Divinity is influenced by these sacrifices and similarly by the Magian Rites. This, however, many of the Platonists, as well as the Aristotelians, Stoics and Epikureans, strenuously denied.

†The term "powers" is used by Abammon in the Aristotelian sense, denoting inherent faculties as prior to the exercise of force and the producing of effects.

‡ Our author here refers, as will be observed, to the declarations of Porphyry, which are quoted in the First Chapter, but are not found in the present text of the Letter to the Expounder Anebo. Porphyry had questioned the utility and actual effect of the sacrificial rites upon the general order of the universe and the purposes of the gods, and likewise whether they were performed in a proper manner as related to the gods, or really procured any advantage to the worshipers themselves.

and in other respects are subject and follow and are subservient to the superior being, and cause of the efficacy of sacrifices. But the demons, and also the terrestrial and pericosmian powers as being principals, are associated together according to rank as is the case with us. Nevertheless, the most effective highest-ranking of the causes of efficacy in the sacrifices are united with the Demiurgic and absolutely perfect powers.

But since these comprehend themselves all the causes, however many they are, we affirm that all the active operators are moved together with these causes at the same moment; and that from them all there descends a common beneficial influence into the whole realm of generated existence. Sometimes this help is imparted according to cities and districts, or to various nations, or to greater or smaller divisions of these. At other times, the benefits are given with an ungrudging willingness to households, or to every individual, and the distribution of them is made freely and without feeling; and with an unimpassioned mind according to relationship and affiliation, as it is right and proper to give; one affection meanwhile holding all together and forming this bond through an unutterable communion.

These things are much more true, and happen to be more correct in relation to the essence and power of the gods, than what thou dost conjecture, namely: "*that they themselves are allured most of all by the fumes of the sacrifices of animals.*" For if there is in any sense a body to the demons which some imagine to be nourished from the sacrifices, this body must be unchangeable and impassive, and likewise luminous and in want of nothing. Hence there is neither need for anything to flow from it nor of an inflow from without. If, however, any one remains still of opinion that this is the case, yet the world and the atmosphere in it have an incessant exhalation from the region about the earth. What need, then, have they of the sacrifices?*

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*It was held that these sacrifices to the demons were more acceptable than exhalations from other things, because that in the fumes there were

On the other hand, the substances which are thus received do not supply to an equivalent amount in proportion to the deficiency created by what has been cast forth, so that neither an excess may predominate nor a deficiency occur, but that there shall exist in like manner in every way, equality and a uniform condition of the bodies of the demons. For the Creator (Demiurgos) does not by any means set food abundant and in reach for all living things in the earth and sea, but has implanted want of the same in the races superior to us. Nor has he furnished to the other living things a natural abundance of the necessaries of life. But to the demons he gives food of a quality adapted to their nature, which is contributed by us human beings. Hence, if we, through laziness or some other pretext, as is likely, should neglect such contributions, the bodies of the demons will be in want of food, and will experience both privation and disorder.*

Why, then, do not they who make these assertions overturn the whole order of things so as to establish us in a better and more powerful arrangement? For if they make us agents to supply nourishment to the demons, we shall be of a category superior to the demons. For every thing receives food and what it requires from the source by which it came into existence. This may be seen in the visible world of created beings, and it is also perceivable in the universal order. For they who are living upon the earth are nourished from the celestial regions. But it becomes more distinctly manifest

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more vivid traces of the living soul, and so a greater relationship. Hence in invocations to the demons and to the manes or shades of the dead, victims were immolated in order that a nourishing exhalation might be obtained from the flowing blood. See *Odyssey*, Book XI.

* Plato, in the *Timæos*, treats of junior divinities, whose bodies were derived from the elements, and were to be dissolved. Proklos also describes the gods of the cosmian universe as both of indissoluble nature and such as are to be dissolved. Plutarch and Hesiod describes demons as a distant race from the gods, and as the inspirers of oracles, but as actually moral. If they commit any fault they are thrust down to earth, fall into the sphere of generated existence, and are fastened to human bodies.

with the invisible causes. For soul is sustained from mind, and physical nature from soul; and other things are also nourished in like manner from their originators.

If, then, it is impossible for us to be the ones who brought the demons into existence, by the same reasoning it is demonstrated that we are not the sources from which they derive their support.

HOW SACRIFICES ARE BENEFICIAL

It seems to me, moreover, that the question now being considered goes astray in another particular. For it ignores the bringing of the sacrifices through fire, as it is rather a consuming and destroying of the matter of which they consist, and likewise an assimilating of it to itself, while in no sense does it become itself assimilated to the matter. It is also a bringing upward to the divine, celestial and non-material fire, but by no means a moving downward to the region of matter and generated existence. For if the enjoying of the fumes of matter in the sacrifices "allured" the Superior races, it is proper that the matter shall be pure from contamination, for in this way there will be a greater exhalation from it to those that partake. Now, however, all is burned and utterly consumed, and is changed into the pure and tenuous substance of fire, which is itself clear proof to the contrary to what thou affirmest. For the superior races are impassive and it is a delight to them to extirpate the matter by means of the fire and to render us impassive. The characteristics in us become like the gods in the same manner as fire transforms all hard and refractory materials to luminant and tenuous bodies.* They likewise lead us upward, by the sacrifices and sacrificial fire to the fire of the gods in

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*Marsilio Ficino, the Italian Platonist, remarks that the fire which is kindled by us is more like heaven than like what is left behind. It is made participant of light, which is a something incorporeal, the most powerful of all things, and as if alive, perpetually moving, dividing everything, yet not itself divisible, absorbing all things into itself, yet evading every alien mixture; and suddenly, when it is fully set free, flying back to the celestial fire which is latent everywhere.

the same way that fire rises to fire, by leading and drawing upward those qualities which drag downward and are opposed to the divine and celestial essences.

SACRIFICIAL FIRE A PURIFIER

To speak without disguise, it is neither from the matter of which the sacrifices consist, nor from the elements, nor from any other of the bodies known to us, that the demons have the vehicle serving as bodies and resembling them.* What fruition, then, can ever take place from an essence of one kind to a different one, or what enjoyment can be imparted by alien natures to those that are alien to them? There is none, but rather it is far the other way. As the gods cut the matter away with the electric fire and separate from it whatever things are non-material in their essence, but yet are held firmly and fettered by it, and as they likewise evolve impassive natures from the impassible—so also the fire that is with us, imitating the operation of the divine fire, destroys everything in the sacrifices that is constituted of matter. It purifies the things that are brought to the fire, releases them from their bonds in matter, and likewise renders them, through its purity of nature, fit for the commonalty of gods. It also, through these changes, releases us from the bonds of generated existence, makes us like the gods, and like-

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*The demons may be described as having vehicles of a substance different from that of bodies, and accorded to the different orders. The demons of the sky are described as having such vehicles composed not of elementary and natural principles, but those of the water and earth were so endowed, and to these the sacrifices were offered. The former were of the number not nourished from the fumes of the sacrifices, but the latter acquire growth from external sources. Yet as the vehicles were not derived from the elements, nor from bodies known to us, our author would have done a favor by telling whence they came. This, however, was no easy thing to do, if modern "materialization" of spiritual beings seems not to have been imagined. Plato, in the *Timæos*, seems to regard the vehicle as self-created, or the production of the "junior gods."

wise renders us fit for their friendship, and our material nature near to the non-material essence.*

THE TRUE CONCEPTS

Having thus refuted the absurd opinions generally in regard to Sacred Rites, we will introduce in their place the true conceptions. As it belongs to another subject, we omit the explanation in detail in respect to each form of sacrifices which the peculiar reason in respect to the rites requires. Nevertheless, any person who is well endowed will be able, from what has been said, to extend his understanding from one subject to many, and cognize quickly from these the things which have been passed over in silence. I think, therefore, that these things have been sufficiently explained, in their different aspects, and because our explanation sets forth becomingly the pure essence and quality of the divine beings. This, however, may appear equally incredible and by no means clear, and likewise suspicious as not setting the reasoning faculty at work, but not extending to the discourses upon the Soul. I mean, therefore, to go over these things a little more fully, and likewise, if possible, to bring forward proofs more conclusive than those which have been already examined.

TWO ORDERS OF DIVINITIES

The best introduction of all shows plainly the institution of Sacred Rites as it relates to the ranking of the gods. At the outset, therefore, we may lay down that some of the gods belong to the realm of matter and others are beyond it; those of the sphere of matter encompassing the matter in themselves, and organizing it, and the non-material divinities being

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*Proklos remarks of the Perfective Discipline, "that, as the Oracles teach, it obliterates, through the divine fire, all the stains derived from generated existence." The Chaldean *Oracle* also says: "The mortal drawing near the sacrificial fire will have light from Divinity."

entirely separate from matter and superior to it.* In the Sacerdotal Technic, it is necessary for the Sacred Rites to be begun from the divinities belonging to the realm of matter, for otherwise there would be no going upward to the gods who are aloof from matter. They have therefore a communion with the sphere of matter in so far as they are placed over it. Hence they have control of those affairs which are permitted in relation to the sphere of matter; as, for example, classification, active effort, repulsion, change, the generation and decay of all material bodies.

Suppose, then, any one should wish to worship divinities of this class according to Theurgic Rites, in a manner proper to them and as originally allotted. In such case, as they are of the realm of matter, the attention ought to be given to a form of service appropriate to that realm. For in this way we will be led wholly into familiar intimacy with them all, and will bring to them in worship what is appropriate to a kindred race. Hence dead bodies and creatures deprived of life, and likewise the slaughter of animals and consuming of the bodies,† and also the manifold change, decay and vicissi-

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*Proklos, in the Commentary upon the *Alkibiades*, sets forth this classification, calling the divinities, the absolute and the cosmian gods. The Chaldean Oracles denominate the latter, the Synochês or Associated divinities. Plato has also called them Lesser or Junior Gods. Other writers declare that these divinities, whose ministry is about the earth and human affairs, actually belong to the order of demons. The gods of the Mystic Rites are accordingly so included.

† Porphyry and others of the philosophers of that period declared distinctly that the sacrifices of living creatures were not for the gods at all, but for demons and the lower orders of spiritual essences. Indeed, their sentiments were considered as evidence of a hostility to Judaism. In archaic times, and even in many centuries of the historical period, human victims were immolated, and the Hebrew writings seem to recognize the custom (*Leviticus* xxvii, 28, 29; *Judges* xi, 30-40; *Micah* vi, 7). Plutarch denounced this practice, and declared his belief that there was never a god that required it, but it was only intended to avert and appease the malice and rancor of evil spirits. The slaughter of hogs at the festivals of Adonis, Osiris and Demites seems to have been of the latter character, as swine were abhorred in Oriental countries.

tude generally which befall to matter pertain to the gods; not to them through themselves, but through the realm of matter over which they are rulers. For although they are to the utmost separated from it they are nevertheless present with it; and although they encompass it by a power which is not of matter, they exist along with it. The things that are thus conducted are not alien to those who conduct them, nor are those that are put in order foreign to those who put them in order, and those likewise that are subservient are not unadapted to those that make use of them as instruments.

Hence the offering of anything belonging to the realm of matter is alien and repugnant to the divinities of the supra-material world, but it is perfectly proper for all those that are allied to matter.*

TWO KINDS OF SACRED RITES

Let us next consider what is in harmony with the sentiments which have been uttered, and without twofold constitution. For when we become entirely soul and are outside of the body, and soaring on high with all the gods of the non-material realm, we occupy ourselves with sublime visions. Then again, we are bound in the oyster-like body and held fast under the dominion of matter, and are corporeal in feeling and aspiration.† There comes, accordingly, therefore, a twofold form of worship. For the one which is for unstained souls will be simple, free of the body and pure from every condition of generated existence; but the other, which is accommodated to souls that are not pure and liberated from

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*Here may be perceived the distinction between different teachers. One school adopted the notion that the body being constituted of matter, was to be macerated and held in low esteem. Plato, however, in *Theætetos*, taught that we escaped from evil in the body by becoming as much as possible like a god. This was to be accomplished by a life of purity and justice, not by bodily worship, but by mental and moral excellence.

†This figure is borrowed from Plato, and we find it eloquently depicted in the *Phædros*.

the conditions of generated existence, is filled with corporeal things and everything that relates to the world of matter.*

I admit therefore that there are two forms of Sacred Rites. The one, those for individuals who are entirely purified. Such rarely happen, as Herakleitos affirms, beyond a single person at one time or a few that may be easily counted. The other class, such as are yet held by the body, consists of those who are of the realm of matter and of corporeal quality, sustaining themselves through change.†

Hence, unless such a form of worship shall be instituted for cities and peoples that are not relieved from the hereditary allotment,‡ and that hold tenaciously to the communion with the body, they will fail utterly of both kinds of good, that which is superior to the realm of matter, and that which is of the world of matter. For the former they are unable to receive, and to the latter they bring nothing of kindred nature. At the same time every one performs his service according to what he is, and certainly not with reference to what he is not. For it is not proper for it to exceed the worshipers' own condition. I have the same thing to say also in respect to the intimate union which joins together the men who are worshiping and the powers that are worshiped as members of a family. For I desire the same unity, that the usage of religious worship which is homogeneous with it shall be chosen, namely: not only that which is non-material being commingled in the manner accordant with itself, and joining the incorporeal natures in a pure manner with themselves, with pure incorporeal powers, but also uniting the corporeal natures after a corporeal manner with corporeal

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*This twofold phase of religious customs, the religion of the right hand and that of the left, still exists with the worshipers of Siva and the Sakti in India. It was exhibited in the Orphic and Dionysiac worships of Greece, and in several Oriental Rites. So the ascetic and the freer religionist were alike treated according to their respective dispositions.

† In other words, holding to no stable purpose, and exhibiting some new energy at every new phase of opinion or experience.

‡ They were considered as more or less infested by evil demons whom it was necessary to placate.

essences, commingling with the bodies the superior essences that pervade them.

WHY WORSHIP IS OF A SENSUOUS CHARACTER

We shall not, therefore, think it unworthy of us to treat also of matters of such a lower character. Thus in respect of the needs of the body, we often perform some office to the guardians of the corporeal nature, the gods and good demons; such as purifying it from old stains, or freeing it of diseases, and making it abound with health, or taking away from it heaviness and torpor, and imparting to it lightness and activity instead—or if nothing else, procuring for it all manner of benefits. We do not, therefore, in any way treat it as though it was of mental quality or even as though it was not corporeal. For the body is not constituted to participate in such modes of proceeding. But when it participates in modes of a nature corresponding to itself, a body is healed and purified by bodies. From necessity of such a kind, therefore, the institution of Sacred Rites will be of a corporeal ideal; on the one hand pruning away what is superfluous in us, and on the other supplying whatever in us is wanting, and also bringing into order and proportion in so far as it is disordered. We often make use of sacred ceremonies, beseeching from the superior races that they do for us many things of importance to the human life. These, doubtless, are the beings that take care of the body, or have charge of those things which we procure for the sake of our bodies.*

SENSUOUS WORSHIP FURTHER JUSTIFIED

What, then, it may be asked, will there be for us from the gods who are entirely exempt from all human conditioned existence in respect to unfruitfulness of the soil, or abundance, or other concern of life? Nothing whatever; for it is not the province of those beings who are free of all such things to touch gifts of this kind.

*In the Egyptian System the human body was apportioned into thirty-six regions, each of which was supposed to be in charge of its own overlord or presiding divinity, and had its class of physicians at the different temples.

But suppose it is affirmed that the divinities who are entirely beyond the realm of matter encompass those of the other class, and when they encompass them, they also include their gifts in themselves, as being the One First Cause.*

It may also be asserted that abundance of the divine bounty comes down from them. But it must be allowed to no one to say that these superior divinities who perform these things come in close contact with the affairs of human life. For such an administration of things here is capable of division into departments, and is exercised with a certain degree of care; it is likewise by no means wholly separate from bodies, and it cannot be endowed with authority entirely untarnished. Does not the mode of religious worship best suit the case in performance of this kind, which is mingled with corporeal matters and allied to generated existence; and not that which is wholly apart from the realm of matter and from concerns of the body? For the mode that is thus pure is absolutely above us, and is wholly unsuitable; but the one that makes use of bodies and of the powers that operate by means of bodies is, in the completest sense of all, especially allied to us. It can not only effect successes in life, but it can also avert imminent misfortunes, and bring harmony and a just tempering of conditions to the mortal race.

THE THREE CLASSES

According to another classification, the numerous throng of human beings is arranged under the head of "Nature." It is governed by the powers of the realm of Nature, looks down to the operations of Nature, and likewise in addition

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*This including of the Superior divinities under the designation of One First Cause, will seem to imply that they were considered as substantially one godhead. The late Prof. Taylor Lewis, of Union College, so viewed the matter. It will be observed that in the Hebrew text of the Bible, the Supreme Being is often designated by a plural term: "The Lord (Yava) our Eloim (Gods) is one." There is abundant evidence that the ancient religious systems generally recognized but one Supreme Divinity, in which all minor powers and essences were included as qualities or attributes. Yet they seem also to have been often regarded as distinct personalities.

makes complete the jurisdiction of Fate, submits to the order of things to be accomplished in so far as it is fated, and also employs practical reasoning in regard to things that belong alone to the department of nature.

A certain few, however, who exercise a faculty of mind superior to nature, are exalted beyond that class and ranked in the order of separate and unalloyed intelligence as being those who have become altogether superior to the powers of the realm of nature.

Others, however, are placed between these as intermediaries between the department of nature and that of pure intelligence; some following after both classes, others pursuing a life commingled from the two, and others being set free from the inferior classes and placed with the more excellent.*

These, then, having been thus defined, that which is to accompany them becomes especially plain. For they who are governed by the general condition of things, and they in particular who live according to their own peculiar natural disposition and make use of their natural powers, adopt the religious worship that is proper to nature and to bodies made active by nature;† making choice of places, atmosphere, matter and powers of matter, bodies and habitudes of bodies, qualities, appropriate dances, changes incident to generated existence, and other things congruous with these, in other departments of religious worship, and in the department which is directly connected with sacrificing.

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*Plotinos has also described these classes with equal distinctness. All from their birth, he declares, make use of the senses before they have acquired any superior perception. He adds that, "Some proceed no further, but pass through life considering the things of sense to be the first and last of all; and as they apprehend that what is painful is evil, and that whatever is pleasant is good, they think it sufficient to pursue the one and to avoid the other. Others have a greater share of intelligence, but do not rise above the earth. Some of these exhibit greater perception, but not superior moral excellence. In the third class are the divine ones who acutely perceive supernal light, rise superior to sense, and live above the world.

†By "Nature" some understood the Great Goddess, others simply a demon, others the Superior Mind.

But they who live with reference to mind alone, and the life which is of the mind, and who are free of the bonds of the realm of nature, exercise diligently in the spiritual and incorporeal law of the Sacred Art relating to the several departments of Theurgy.

Those who are intermediary between the two classes, pursue assiduously the ways of holiness in different manner, according to the differences between them, either participating in both these modes of religious devotion, or standing aloof from one of them, or accepting them as a foundation of things more valuable. For without these they may never accomplish the higher attainments. In some other way perhaps they may take them in hand in a becoming manner.

THREE CLASSES OF DIVINITIES

In respect, however, to this very mode of distinction, there is brought to our attention the following classification of the divine Essences and powers:

1. Some have a soul and nature subject and subservient to their creations, in whatever way they will.

2. Others are entirely separate from soul and nature. I mean from the divine soul and nature and not from the cosmic and genetic soul and nature only.

3. Some, however, are intermediaries between them, and preserve a communion from each to each other; either by an unsevered bond of union, or by a generous imparting of superior benefits or an unchecked reception of lesser ones, or by the harmony of mind which binds both together.*

When, therefore, we are worshiping the gods that are kings of the realms of soul and nature, it is not out of the way to present to them natural powers and bodies that are not controlled by nature, devoting to them what is not worthless. For all the operations of nature are subservient to them and associated with them in the administration of the world.

*Mr. Thomas Taylor classes the intermediary divinities as *archai* or rulers (principalities, *Ephesians* vi, 12), and *apulutoi* or liberated; the one being supercosmic and the other supercelestial, or superior to the visible gods in the sky.

But when we are paying homage to these gods that are uniform in respect to themselves, it is proper to distinguish them with unlimited honors. Gifts of a spiritual character are suited to them, things of the incorporeal life, and likewise such as virtue and wisdom bestow, and whatever good things of the soul are perfect and entire.

And moreover, to the intermediary divinities, those who lead in benefits of the middle class, sometimes gifts of a twofold character will be suitable, and sometimes those common to both the classes, or those which are separate from the lower orders but belong to the higher; or to sum up the whole matter, those which will in one of the modes be amply sufficient for the intermediate.

THE EXALTED CONDITION NOT COMMON TO ALL

Setting out from another original principle: that of the world and the cosmian divinities, and likewise the distribution of the four elements in the world, the apportioning of the elements by allotment in due proportion, and their circling revolution in orderly arrangement in respect to centers, we have an easy path to the true conception of the holy rites in respect to sacrifices. Suppose we ourselves are in the world, and are included as parts in the whole universe, that we are likewise produced by it at first and brought to maturity by all the forces in it, and also that we are constituted from the elements in it, and receive from it a certain allotment of life and nature. We may not, on account of these things, pass over the world and the cosmian arrangements. We must grant accordingly that in every region about the world there is this body which we observe, and there are also the incorporeal classified powers around the bodies. Hence the law of religion, it is plain, assigns like things to like and extends in this manner through the universal spaces from on high to the last, assigning things incorporeal to the incorporeal, and things corporeal to the corporeal, each giving to the other in due accord with their peculiar nature.

But when one of the theurgists becomes participant with the supernal gods—which is the rarest occurrence of any—

that individual, he, from whatever corner he may come, being united to the gods by a supernal power, is superior to corporeal things and the realm of matter, as respects the worship of the gods. This sublime attainment is made by a person with difficulty and at a late period at the end of the sacred experience. It is not proper, therefore, to set it forth as a matter common to everybody; and in particular it should not be made common to those who are beginners in the theurgic discipline, nor to those who are midway in it; for these, in some way or other, bestow attention upon sacred matters as if it were a matter of bodily concern.*

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*Iamblichos, in the "Life of Pythagoras," remarks that "He who pours clean water into a muddy well does but disturb the mud." In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus charges the disciples not to give the holy truth to dogs, nor cast pearls before the swine; for the latter will tread the jewels under their feet, and the dogs will rend the uncautious givers.

XIII

CONCERNING THE MYSTIC RITES

CHAPTER XIII

CONCERNING THE MYSTIC RITES

I think, therefore, that all who delight in the spectacle of Theurgic reality* will acknowledge this: that it is not proper to render to the gods partially or imperfectly the devotion which is rendered to them. Thus, therefore, before the gods make their appearance at the Rites, all the powers (potentates or demons) that are subject to them, are set in motion;† and when the gods are about to move toward the earth, they come ahead and go before them in procession. He, therefore, who does not bestow on all of them what he should, and address every one according to the honor to which he is entitled, is

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*The spectacular representations exhibited at the Sacred Rites to candidates for initiation and others participating in the worship.

†The "powers" are here distinctly set forth as spiritual essences. Proklos recognizes them as belonging to the order of demons, and informs us that there is an innumerable company of them about every god, and that they are named by his appellations, as though they were themselves the divinity. "In the most holy scenes of the Initiatory Rites," says he, "prior to the manifestations of the divinity as present, troops of chthonian demons make their appearance, calling the attention of the candidates from things pure and good to the realm of Matter."

I am reminded of the "subject-spirits" described by Emanuel Swedenborg. If one of them is imagined by the individual with whom it is communicating, to be some particular person, then the spirit, as if mesmerized, immediately supposes itself to be that person.—A. W.

made to go away uninitiated and disappointed of the participation with the gods. But he who propitiates them all, bringing to every one the gifts in his power that are most suitable and acceptable, always remains safe and without blame, having well and most carefully accomplished the reception of the divine chorus.*

Since, therefore, this is the case, which of the two is proper: that the ceremonial of the Sacred Rite shall be simple and consisting of a few particulars, or elaborate and adapted to every move—or, so to speak, as if from everything in the world mingled together? If, indeed, the power that is invoked and influenced by the Sacred Rite were simple and of one order alone, the ceremonial of the sacrifices would be of necessity also simple. But suppose the multitude of other powers (demons and minor spiritual beings) that are aroused and set in motion at the descending of the gods can be included in no simple rite. The theurgists, from being experienced in the performances, are the only ones that know these things accurately, and they alone are able to cognize what constitutes the perfect celebration of the Sacred Ceremony. They are also aware that the omissions, though few, defeat the whole performance of the Sacred Rite, just as when in a harmony a single chord is broken, the whole becomes out of tune and discordant.†

As therefore, in the divine descents which are visible there

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*The primitive conception of sacrifices was that they afforded refreshment to spiritual beings; as for example, the deceased member of a family. Such offerings are made at stated periods in China and India and were once universal. Demons and embodied souls were also considered as thus receiving service and delight, and it was to them that the sacrifices were actually devoted. (1 *Corinthians* x, 20.) Hence, sacrifices became festivals to which friends were invited, and the principal viands were consecrated by invoking the divinities. See 1 *Samuel* ix, 12, 13-21, 23, and *Malachi* i, 12.

†"In the Divine Dramas or Discourses," says Simplikios, "if anything is omitted, or is displaced, or comes up afterward, the divine illumination does not take place, but the remissness of the one who is doing this makes vapid the power of what has been accomplished."

occurs manifest injury to those who leave any of the superior beings unhonored,* so likewise when they are present at the sacrifices unseen it is not well to honor one and not another, but instead every one should be honored according to the order to which he is allotted. He who leaves any of them without a gift holds the whole thing fast and destroys the one and entire arrangement. He does not, as some may therefore imagine, make the reception an imperfect one, but, on the other hand, he absolutely overturns the whole purpose of the Sacred Rite.

SACRED RITES MULTIFORM

What then? Does not the highest part of the Sacred Technic recur of itself to the One Supreme above the whole multitude of divinities, and yet at the same time worship in him the many essences and principalities?

Certainly, I may be answered, but this takes place at a very late period, and only with the exceedingly few; and if it comes at the very sunset of life, they are content. Our present discussion, however, does not set forth the law for a man of such character, for he is superior to all law;† but it establishes such a system of law for those who are in need of superior legislation.‡ It says accordingly, that as the universe

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*Æneus, the king of Kalydon, it was fabled, once celebrated a sacrifice at which he omitted to honor the goddess Artemis. She by way of punishment sent a boar to ravage his dominions.

†This declaration is sustained by the Apostle Paul. "If you are led by the spirit of noetic faculty," says he, "you are not under law." The Greek term here used by both writers is *nomos,* an enactment, and not *thesmos,* a sacred decree. Plotinos has explained this mental exaltation here affirmed. "We receive the Infinite by a faculty superior to the understanding," he inculcates; "we enter into a condition of mind in which we are no longer our own selves, but become partakers of the divine nature." The philosopher, it is recorded, has attained this mental and moral exaltation. Its similarity to the state of *Yogi* or consecration, described by Indian sages, is evident.

‡Syrianos, and Taylor following him, have substituted *thesmos* for *thumos* in the Greek text. The phrase otherwise would have read: "for those who are bound by passion."

is a system from many orders combined into one, so it is proper that the complete ceremonial of the Sacred Rites, unceasing and entire, shall be joined with the whole category of the superior races. Certainly, indeed, if the cosmos is manifold and entire, and is constituted in many orders, it is proper accordingly that the Sacred Performance shall copy its various features, because of all the powers which they present to view.* Hence, in relation to these and to the various kinds that are about us, it is not proper for us to be intimately connected with the divine causes (or beings) that are over them, from a part of the qualities in them. On the contrary, we should not aspire to be with their leaders, when anything on our part is omitted or incomplete.

THE BENEFITS FROM THE SACRIFICES

The diversified mode of celebrating the Holy Rite in the Sacred Performances, therefore, not only purifies us, but it also makes perfect something of the defects in us or about us, establishes in harmony and order, and otherwise delivers us from faults of deadly character.† It likewise brings all into familiar relations with the races superior to us. And, certainly, when the divine causes and the human adaptations closely resembling them meet together to the same end, the initiation or Perfective Rite assures every full and ample benefit of the sacrifice.

It will not be amiss, however, to add such particulars as the following in order to give an accurate understanding in respect to these things. The divinities of the highest order have always a superabundance of power, and while it is supe-

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*"Religion is the imitating of what you worship."

†Expositors interpret these statements as setting forth that the Sacrifices were expiatory or purifying in the way of averting diseases and other impurities, as seems to be signified by the establishing in harmony and order. In the sixteenth chapter the benefits of the Initiatory Rites are substantially classed under three heads, which have been denominated astrologic, iatric or curative, and telestic or perfective. The initiatory or Perfect Rite, it was considered, exalted the candidate beyond the sphere of generated existence, as in the maksha or nirvana of the Buddhists.

rior to all it is at the same time present with them all equally without impediment. In conformity with this statement, therefore, the very first illuminate the last, and those who are superior to matter are present with those belonging with matter, but not after the manner of the world of matter.

Let no one be surprised even though we say that there is a certain matter that is pure and divine. For it originates from the Father and Demiurgos of the universe and possesses a completeness of its own suitable for a receptacle of gods. At the same time nothing obstructs the superior races from being able to illuminate the lower orders from their own substance. Nor does anything hold matter back from participating of the superior natures. So far as it is perfect, pure and evidently good it is not an unsuitable receptacle of the gods.* For as it is necessary that the races in the earth shall be in no respect deprived of a divine participation, the earth also receives a divine portion from it, which is sufficient to admit the gods.

The Theurgic discipline, therefore, recognizing these things and thus discovering in common with others the suitable receptacles of the gods according to the individual peculiarity of each, often joins together stones, plants, animals, and sacred aromatics, perfect and godlike, and afterward forms from all these a receptacle complete and pure. For it is not proper to be dissatisfied with everything material, but only with that which is repugnant to the gods. But that particular matter is to be chosen which is akin to them as capable of being in accord both in building the houses of the gods, in the setting up of carved images, and, in fine, in the sacred ceremonial of sacrifices. For in no other manner can there be any participation in the receiving of the superior beings in places upon the earth or by human beings dwelling there unless such a beginning shall have been first established.

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*Plato in the *Timæos* denominates matter, the materia or maternal principle of the universe, the *tithoné* or nurse, and the *upodoché* or receptacle, the womb of created things. Professor Butler remarks accordingly that "it is the transition-element between the real and the apparent, the eternal and the contingent."

We ought, then, to confide in the arcane declarations, that by means of the holy spectacles, a certain principle of matter is transmitted from the gods. This matter without doubt is of the same nature with the very ones themselves by whom it is given. Hence, does not the sacrificing of such a kind of matter arouse the gods to the visible manifestation, invite them to come quickly to our perception, and likewise receive them when they are present and cause them to unfold themselves perfectly to view?

THE KIND OF SACRIFICES MOST PROPER

The same things may also be learned from the assignment of the gods according to places, and from the division of authority over every particular thing, so far as they are assigned according to the different ranks, or the greater or lesser allotments. For this is certainly plain: that to the gods that are in charge over particular places the things that are produced by them are the most proper to be brought for sacrifice, and those that pertain to the governed are best suited for the divinities that govern. For to the makers their own works are most particularly gratifying, and to those who first of all introduce certain things such are acceptable above all else. If, on the other hand, certain animals, or plants, or other of the productions upon the earth, are under the rule of the superior races* the divinities participate together in their superintendence and procure for us an inseparable union to themselves. Some of these things, therefore, being care-

*The ancient Egyptians were famed for their veneration of sacred animals, plants and other objects, and many absurd and ridiculous jests have been made on this account. Plutarch carefully explains the matter. "Nothing can be a god to men," says he, "that is either without soul or is under their power." But language is often mistaken in its purport, and symbolic language in particular. What the teacher utters as from his right hand, the hearer receives as with his left. "Those who have not learned the true sense of the words will also mistake in the things." In this way statues and emblems have been spoken of as actual objects of worship, and animals that were only symbolic personifications of divinity have been asserted to be the real divinities that were worshipped. The intelligent worshipper had no difficulty in perceiving the real truth.

fully saved and guarded, increase with the gods the intimate familiarity of those who hold them fast, inasmuch as by being kept inviolate they preserve in full force the communion of gods and men.

Of such a character are some of the animals of Egypt, and in the same manner, the human being everywhere is sacred.* Some of the consecrated victims, however, make the familiar relationship more conspicuous, so far as they affect the analysis in respect to the kindred and more sacred origin of the primitive elements with the Superior (divine) causes. This being accomplished, the benefits which are imparted from it are more perfect.

A TUTELAR DIVINITY TO EVERY PEOPLE

If, then, these were human customs alone and so derived their authority through our institutions, it might be asserted that the Holy Rites of the gods were inventions of our own devising. Now, however, God, who is thus invoked in the sacrifices, is their author, and the gods and angels† around him constitute a numerous throng. Under him, likewise, there is a public Overlord assigned by allotment to each nation upon the earth, and to every sanctuary its own.‡ Of the sacrifices

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*In other words, likely to be a victim at the altar. "As Manetho related, they were used in archaic times to burn living men in the city of Ilithyia, styling them Typhonian." Aahmes, who expelled the Hyk-sos rulers, put an end to the custom. It existed in Asiatic countries, where Semitic worships existed, and even the Hebrews seem not to have been an exception. As late as the period of the Persian wars with the Greeks, Themistokles is said to have sacrificed three Persian prisoners to the demons or chthonian gods, and Amestris, the Queen of Xerxes, to have buried fourteen Persians alive. Even at a later period Caius Marius immolated his daughter to propitiate the gods; and some tribes still keep up the custom. There is a formula for human sacrifice among the Siva-worshippers of India. The putting of prisoners to death and cannibalism are vestigia of the same practice.

†The angels are not a common constituent in the Egyptian and Hellenic categories. They were adopted evidently from Judæa or Assyria about the same time.

‡See Daniel x, 13, 21; xii, 1.

made to the gods, a god is director; of those to the angels, it is an angel; of those to the demons, a demon; and in like manner in other cases a superintendent is appointed over each in the manner consonant with the particular race. When, therefore, we bring our sacrifices to the gods, in company with the gods that superintend and make complete the mystic rites, it is our duty at the same time to revere the institution of sacred divine worship in regard to the Sacrifices. At the same time, however, it becomes us to be of good courage as we celebrate the holy rites under the ruling gods, and likewise to exercise suitable caution, that we may not bring some gift unworthy of the gods, or obnoxious to them.

In conclusion, then, we admonish at all events that the endeavor be made in respect to those around us, gods, angels and demons, that are distributed according to race, in every part of the universe; and that an acceptable sacrifice shall be presented alike to them all. For only so can the Holy Rites be celebrated in a manner worthy of the divine beings that preside over them.

CONCERNING PRAYER

A part of the Sacred Rites and not the least important is that of the prayers. They fill out the sacrifices to the fullest extent, and through these the entire performance becomes established and perfect. They likewise effect the general combined operation with the worship, and bring the Sacred Service into indissoluble copartnership with the gods. It will not be amiss to relate a few things in respect to this subject. For this very thing is of itself worthy to be learned, and it makes our superior perception in respect to the gods more perfect.*

I affirm, therefore, that the first ideal of prayer is a collecting (of our thoughts) and likewise a leading to contact

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*"Prayer is by no means an insignificant part of the upward path of souls," says Proklos. Sacrifices and Holy Rites were considered as the body of the prayers, and prayer as the animating principle of sacrifices. The Chaldæan Oracle also declares: "The mortal approaching the fire will receive illumination from the divine ones."

and a genuine knowing of God. Next after this is the binding in communion with a single mind, and also the calling to us of the gifts which the gods have sent down, before the uttering of a word, completing the entire performances before it was perceived. But in the most perfect ideal which is the most perfect form of prayer, the occult union is sealed and its validity assured by the gods, procuring perfect repose in them for our souls. In these three limits in which everything divine is measured, prayer, making our friendship worthy of the gods, gives us the sacred aid from them three-fold.* The first of these relates directly to illumination, the second to a general completion of effort, and the third to the complete fulfilment by means of the fire.† At one time, prayer precedes the Sacred Rites, again it divides the Sacred Performance in the middle, and at another time, it further effects the purpose of the sacrifices. No sacred performance takes place properly, without the supplications in the prayers. But continual exercise in them nourishes our mind and spiritual nature, makes the reception-chambers of the soul vastly more spacious for the gods,‡ opens the arcana of the gods to human

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*The edition of Scutellius has this fuller reading: "Prayer not only assures to us the friendship of the gods, but brings to our hand three fruits, which are, so to speak, golden apples from the Hesperidean gardens."

Proklos designates these three stages of prayer *γεφπέλασις*, and *γενωσις*, the contact, the approach, the perfect union. These are preceded by two conditions: to know the different ranks of the divine beings to which they belong, and the *οικειωσις* or family alliance by which we become adopted by the gods. We are then without contact or any thing of matter made ready for the illumination.

†The *Chaldean Oracles* describe the Supreme Divinity as Fire, creative-life-bringing and intellectible. "A whirlwind drew forth the bloom of the shadowy fire and impregnated the wombs of the universe." (Compare *Genesis* i. 2.) "She is the producer of the work, because she is the giver of life-bringing fire." The fire as a symbol in the shrine of the temple, and the employment of sacred fire to consume the consecrated parts of the sacrifices, thus represent the Supreme Fire by which all things subsist and are made complete.

‡Proklos adds the following in the way of comment: "It fills the entheast soul to its full measure."

beings, accustoms us to the irradiations of the Light,* and by degrees perfects the qualities within us to a conjoining with the gods, brings us back again to the very summit.† It quietly draws upward our habits of thought and imparts to us the moral qualities of the gods. And besides this, persuasive discourse awakens a fellowship and affection that are indissoluble. It likewise augments the divine love and lights up the divine quality of the soul. It also cleanses away everything from the soul that is of a contrary character, and removes whatever about it is of an æther-like and luminant spirit, so far as it is allied to the sphere of generated existence. It likewise makes perfect a good hope and confidence in respect to the Light, and, in short, brings to perfection those who are exercised in these disciplines, so that we may call them Companions of the gods.

If this is what may be said of prayer, that it effects in us benefits of such importance, and likewise that it has a close relation to the sacrifices which we have mentioned, does not the object of the Sacred Rites thereby become clear, that it is a participating in intimate relations with the Creator? As then through the celebrating of the Rites, the benefit from it is as much as is conferred by the demiurgic divinities upon human beings.‡ Indeed, from that source the exalting, the

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*The representation of the Divine essence as a supernal luminance is universal. The passage in the proem of the Johannean Gospel has been the philosophic dogma of all periods: "In the Logos or divine reason, was life, and the life was the light of mankind." The *Chaldean Oracle* also says: "When thou shalt see a very holy fire without definable shape, leaping as it shines, hearken to the voice of the Fire." Moses and Zoroaster both professed to hear the words of the Deity spoken out of fire. (Deut. v.)

Pure fire unmingled with material particles is not visible to the human faculty of sight. This explains satisfactorily the apparent contradiction, in which the Supreme Being is depicted as Light, and likewise as enveloped in clouds and thick darkness.

†"Through Prayer," says Proklos, "the summit of moral excellence, the holiness which pertains to the gods, is attained."

‡This is an allusion upon which Plato throws light in the *Timæos*. "He (the Demiurgos or Creator) charged the junior gods with the work of constructing mortal bodies, as well as everything additional that was

perfecting and completing influence of the prayers becomes manifest, how it becomes active, how unifying, and it has a common bond which is given from the gods. In the third place, therefore, any one may easily perceive from what has been said, that the two (prayer and sacrifice) are established through each other and impart to each other the sacred power of the holy perfective rite.

Hence there is manifest through all parts of the Sacerdotal System, the complete agreement and joint working with itself: the parts of it being more naturally connected than those of any animal, and joined together by one uninterrupted continuity of substance. Of this fact we ought never to be unmindful; nor should we accept half of it and reject the other half, but should be exercised in them all alike. It is necessary that they who desire genuinely to be conjoined with the gods should be initiated through the whole of them.

These things, therefore, may not be otherwise.

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required for the human soul. He gave them dominion over these and all things consequent thereto, and bade them rule over the mortal creation as nobly and honorably as they could, in order that it might not become the cause of evil to itself." The "Junior Gods" are those so generally mentioned by our author. They are also classed under the head of *αἴτια, aitia*—causes or categories—and as we here observe, are the demiurgic or organizing causes.

XIV

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

PART VI

CHAPTER XIV

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

CONTAMINATION FROM DEAD ANIMALS

In regard to what remains to be considered, it is high time for me to pass on to the difficulty which you next suggest. "It is also required," you say, "*that the Beholder* must be pure from the contact of anything dead, and yet the rites employed to bring the gods hither, many of them are made effective through dead animals.*" In order to reconcile these apparent contradictions we will take a survey of the conflict that seems to exist. There is no opposition at all in the case, but it only appears to be a contradiction in terms. For, indeed, if the law of the Rites commanded both that the dead bodies of the sacrifices should not be touched, and also that they should be touched, this would be contradictory to itself. But if it enjoins to keep aloof from those bodies that have not been consecrated, but permits to touch those that are purified, this is no contradiction.†

Further still, it is not allowable to handle the bodies of human beings after the soul has left them. For there is a certain trace, an eidôlon, or reflection of divine life which has been extinguished in the body by death. But it is not an unholy act to touch other animals that are dead, since they do not share the diviner life. It is, therefore, in the case of the other divinities, such as are not separate from matter, that abstinence from touching is essential, but in that of the gods that preside over animals and are intimately united to them, the invocation through animals in sacrifice is conceded.

According to this view, therefore, there is no contradiction.

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*The *epoptes, ephoros, Theôros* or candidate undergoing initiation, and so contemplating the views presented for his instruction.

†Porphyry himself, and Plotinos before him, it may be remarked, did not approve of the killing of animals for food or sacrifice. They also regarded the touch of a dead body as polluting to the person touched.

CONCERNING IMPURITY FROM THE DEAD

This matter may also be explained in another way. For bodies deprived of life do bring defilement to human beings who are held by matter, because that which is not alive places a stain upon the living individual, like filth upon the clean, and one in a state of privation upon one in possession of a sufficiency, and also because it produces a taint through the natural aptitude to a worse condition by there being the power of dying. But the body produces no defilement upon a demon, he being entirely incorporeal, and not receiving corruption from anywhere. On the other hand, it is necessary for him to be superior to the corruptible body, and not to receive from it into himself any reflection of corruption.

This much, therefore, I say in reference to the difficulty which you suggest in regard to the contradiction.

ANIMALS IN DIVINATION

While explaining by itself how divination is performed by means of the sacred animals, as, for example, by hawks,* we did not assert in any manner that by the employment of bodies thus brought into affinity, the gods were present. For they are not set over animals singly, either by assignment, or by any relation to the realm of matter. But to the demons, and especially to those that are apportioned to the realm of matter, such dealing with the agencies of divination may be assigned, different animals being allotted to different ones, and such ascendency having been established through contiguity, and they not having been assigned by lot to their respective dominion, by lot are entirely independent and clear

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*The hawk was held in special esteem in Ancient Egypt. Râ the Sun-God was represented in the hieroglyphics with a hawk's head holding the solar circle in its beak; and Thôth was also depicted having the same emblem, to show that he was the genius of intelligence. The bird was regarded as having the faculty of divining. Its body after death was embalmed and deposited in the shrine at Buto, and whoever killed one, even by accident, was punished by death. In Greece, likewise, the hawk was a symbol of the sun, and sacred to Apollo, the god of oracles.

of the realm of matter. Or, if any one desires it to be set forth, a seat or vehicle may be assigned to them of such a character by means of which they may be enabled to hold converse and give responses to human beings. We must think, then, that this vehicle is pure from contamination of bodies; for no communion whatever exists between that which is pure and the contrary, but there is a reason for it to be conjoined with human beings through the soul of animals.* For this soul has a nature kindred to human beings, through a like vital principle; and likewise to demons, because being free from bodies it after a manner exists separately. But as it is intermediate between both, it is subservient to the controlling demon, yet it makes known to those who are still withheld in the body whatever the overlord directs. Thus a common bond of union is given between them, each to the other.

THE ART OF DIVINING DEFECTIVE

It ought to be borne in mind, however, that the soul that makes use of such methods of divination, not only becomes a hearer of the oracle, but it also contributes from itself, to no small degree, a certain fatality for the accomplishing of it in respect to the performances. For through a certain sympathy of necessity, they are moved together, and act and prognosticate together. Hence such a mode of divining as this is entirely different from the mode that is divine and genuine;† being able to give oracles in relation to trivial and everyday matters—such as pertain to the diversified realm of nature, and are now brought into relation to generated existence. They likewise impart activities from themselves to

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*It was held that souls, when separated from the bodies by violence, continue to abide around the bodies, and hence that the theurgic priests were able through their agency to draw the guardian demons to them.

†Augustin of Hippo berated Porphyry in regard to this distinction between "divine" or "angelic" and the other communications. "Behold," says he, "Iamblichos, the patron of the Egyptian priests, deserts his clients."

those capable of receiving them and produce emotional conditions of many kinds in those who are naturally susceptible to being affected in concert.* But the perfect faculty of foreknowing is never developed by emotional excitement. For that which is most of all the unchangeable, and likewise the exempt from matter and in every way pure, attains readily to a perception of the future; but that which is commingled with the irrationality and darkness of the corporeal and materialistic nature, is filled with dense ignorance. Hence, it is never well to receive any such ingenious procedure in divination. Nor ought we to make use of it with any considerable eagerness, nor to trust another person that does it, as though it possessed of itself any clear and well-known evidence of truth. This is enough for us to say in relation to this kind of divining.

CONCERNING THREATS MADE IN THE RITES

Come, then, let us discourse about difficulties of another class, that are in the category of occult things, and which contain, as you say, "*threats of violence.*" In regard to the multitude of threats, the accusation is divided into many parts. For the actor threatens that he will either "assail the sky, reveal to view the arcana of Isis, expose to public gaze the ineffable symbol in Abydos,† to stop the Baris, scatter the

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*This accounts also for the enthusiasm characteristic of the Bacchic festivals, and kindred exhibitions at public assemblies, where some powerful influence predominates. Such nervous affections as hysteria and epilepsy are sometimes occasioned in such ways. In the old languages the same terms are used to denote mental derangement and prophetic inspiration.

†In the Greek text of the Letter of Porphyry this term is "adyton," the inner shrine of the temple, but here it is Abydos, a city in Middle Egypt, where was the most ancient temple to Isis and Osiris, and also a "tomb." Some writers insist that only the adytum was meant; others that reference is made to the shrine at Abydos. This was the oldest metropolis in Egypt.

The theologic myths of Egypt contain an explanation of these expressions. Osiris and Isis, or Uasar and Uasi, were the two principal divinities commemorated in the Egyptian Sacred Rites. They were doubtless

limbs of Osiris like Typhon, or do something else of a similar character.''

The men do not, as you imagine, hold out this form of words as a threat ''to the Sun-god, or to the Moon, or any of the divine ones in the sky''; for then there would occur more fearful monstrosities than those of which you angrily complain. On the other hand, as I said before in these explanations, there is in the divisions of the world a class of powers, incapable of judgment, and unreasoning. It receives and obeys a word of command from another, but it neither makes use of intelligence of its own, nor distinguishes the true and the false, or the possible or impossible. Such a race of beings, when threats are held over them incessantly, are thrown into agitation and filled with amazement. Hence, I think that it is natural for this class to be led by forcible utterances, and to attract other things by means of senseless and unstable phantasy.

THE THREATENING FURTHER EXPLAINED

These things have also another explanation, as follows: The theurgic priest, through the power of the ineffable emblems, commands the cosmic spirits, not as a human being, nor as making use of a human soul.* On the other hand, as

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of Asiatic origin, and the legend seems to be a representation of the contest with the Shepards. Seth, Sutekh, or Typhon was the tutelary god of Northern Egypt of the Hyk-sos, and of the Kheti or Hittites of Asia. He is described as the brother of Osiris and as having treacherously murdered him, and afterward dismembering the body. The widowed Isis wanders over Egypt and to Phœnicia in quest of his remains. They are finally transported in the boat Baris to their final resting-place. The simulacrum of one part is placed in every shrine as a sacred relic. These things were commemorated in the Sacred Rites.

*See Part IV, Chapter II. "In all theurgic rites there is a double character put forward: the one as a human being, the other as participating of a superior nature and exalted to the order of divinities. . . . In the former the priest makes the invocation as a man and supplicates the superior beings; in the other, he commands the powers of the universe, because through the ineffable symbols, he is in some manner invested with the sacred character of the gods."

one preëxisting in the order of the gods, he makes use of threatenings more terrible than he could make from his own being alone. This is not as though he was about to do everything which he confidently affirms, but he teaches by such use of words how much, how great and what power he has through being at one with the gods. This power the knowledge of the ineffable symbols imparts to him.

This also can be said: That the demons who are distributed by departments, and who are guardians over the departments of the universe, have charge and superintendence individually of the departments to which they were allotted; so that they do not even admit a word to the contrary, but preserve the perpetual continuance of things in the world without change. They assume this unchangeableness, because the order of the gods remains immovably the same. Hence, they do not endure even to a hearing, that this shall be threatened in which the demons of the atmosphere and those of the earth have their being.*

DEMONS THE GUARDIANS OF THE MYSTERIES

The subject may also be explained as follows: The demons have the guardianship of the Ineffable Mysteries. Thus, therefore, I assure you they maintain to a superior degree the orderly arrangement everywhere. For through this the constituent parts of the universe remain in their order because the beneficent power of Osiris continues pure and immaculate, and is not at all commingled with the opposing vice and disorder. The life of all things also remains pure and uncorrupt because the occult life-producing beauties of the rational faculties of Isis do not descend into the body, which is manifest and visible to the senses. But all things remain immutable and ever-coming into existence,† because the course of

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*The powers having as their vahan or vehicle the sun, moon and stars, were the demons thus threatened.

†In the ancient philosophy, creation was identical with generation. Hence the universe is styled "aeigenes" or ever generated, as being constantly replenished and renewed. Creation is a work always taking place.

the sun is never stopped. All things likewise remain perfect and entire because the ineffable arcane in Abydos (or in the inner shrine) are never at any time revealed to profane contemplation. Hence in these conditions, in which consists the safety of all things, I say, in the ineffable symbols being preserved occult and in the unutterable essence of the gods never being repressed by the contrary allotment—this is not endurable even by sound for the demons to listen to that belong around the earth, namely: that they are diverse in quality, or are unhallowed beings, and that on this account such a style of [threatening] words has a certain appropriateness to them. No one, however, utters a threat to the gods, nor is any such mode of prayer addressed to them.

Accordingly with the Chaldæans, with whom there has been a pure language set apart for the gods alone, a threat is never uttered. The Egyptian priests, however, having intermingled at the same time the divine symbolic terms and the demonian words, make use, when it is proper, of threats.

Thou hast now the answer in relation to these difficulties; concise, indeed, but I think sufficiently clearing away every one of them.

XV

ORIGIN OF EGYPTIAN SYMBOLISM

PART VII

SACRED NAMES AND SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION

CHAPTER XV

ORIGIN OF EGYPTIAN SYMBOLISM

Those difficulties require for solution the same divinely wise Muse. I desire, beforehand, however, to interpret to thee the peculiar form of the theologic system of the Egyptians. For they, endeavoring to represent the productive principle of the universe and the creative function of the gods, exhibit certain images as symbols of mystic, occult and invisible conceptions, in a similar manner as of Nature (the productive principle), in her peculiar way, makes a likeness of invisible principles through symbols in visible forms.* But the creative energy of the gods delineates the genuine reality of the forms through the visible images. The Egyptian priests, therefore, perceiving that all the superior races are gratified at the resemblances of the inferior tribes to themselves, and desiring to supply the latter with benefits through such representations, so far as possible, do themselves bring into use for them as may be expected, a mode of initiation into the mysteries which is appropriately concealed in the symbols.

SYMBOL EXPLAINED.

Listen, therefore, to the spiritual interpretation of the symbols, according to the conception of the Egyptian priests, dismissing from thy imagination and hearing the phantom-likeness of the symbols themselves, and bringing thyself upward to the spiritual reality.

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*See *Herodotos*: II, 60. *Plutarch, Isis and Osiris* 18, and throughout.

By "ilus" or slime, then, recognize everything of a corporeal nature or belonging to the realm of matter, or that is nourishing and procreative, or such as is a material form belonging to the realm of nature and borne along with the never-still currents of the realm of matter, or such as the river of generative existence contains and which sinks with it, or the originating cause of the elements and of all the powers relating to the elements, which subsisted before in correspondence to a foundation.*

It being of such a quality, God, who is author of all generation and production, and of all elemental forces, as being superior to them, immaterial and incorporeal, exalted above the realm of nature and likewise begotten and undivided, entire of himself and concealed in himself, is supreme above all these and embraces them all in himself. And because he contains everything and gives himself to all the universe, he is made manifest out from them. Because he is superior to the universe, he is spread out over it by himself, and is manifested as separate, removed, high in the air and unfolded by himself above the forces and elementary principles in the world.†

The following symbol likewise attests this: For the one "sitting above the lotus-blossom" expresses enigmatically an exaltation above the slime, and likewise denotes spiritual and empyrial supremacy.‡ For everything pertaining to the lotos,

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*This definition of *ilus* or slime applies also to hulê, the foundation-principle of everything denominated "material." It is a concept of the mind, and not a something that can be weighed, measured, or perceived by the senses: and if the term has any intelligible meaning, it may be designated as passive, negative or objectified force.

†The representation of the winged disk, so common in Egyptian symbolism, is here denoted. The description also applies to the figures of Assur and Ahurmazda of the Assyrian and Persian temples floating in the air above the Sacred Tree and the adoring King and priests.

‡The lotos or Nymphæ was anciently esteemed as the queen of the world of blossoms. Each of its numerous species seems to have been regarded as sacred in some of the ancient nations, and the same veneration is still maintained in China and India. The American pond-lily is of the same family. It has been conjectured to have received its dis-

both the forms in the leaves and the appearance of the seed, is observed to be circular. This very energy is akin to the unique circle-like motion of the mind, manifesting it in like manner according to the same forms, in a single arrangement, and according to one principle.

The god himself, however, is seated alone, above any such dominion or energy, august and holy, filled abundantly, and remaining in himself without change, as the figure of one sitting is intended to signify.*

The one "sailing in a Boat"† sets before the mind the power that directs the world. As, therefore, the Pilot, being apart from the ship, has the control of its rudders, so the Sun subsisting separately has control of the helms of all the world. And as the pilot from above at the stern, giving forth from himself the first brief beginning of the course, directs everything, so by an infinite priority of rank, the God from above, imparts without division from the first principles of Nature, the first-operative causes of motions. These things, therefore, and still more than these, are denoted by One Sailing in a boat.

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tinction from the analogy of its seeds, which sprout in the capsule of the plant and begin to grow till they burst the pericarp and float away to take root in the slime by themselves.

The Egyptian priests were accustomed to exhibit simulacra of the gods in circles and globes as symbols of the uniform principle of life. Hermes Trismegistus compared Divinity to a circle, and the sublime description will be remembered, that its centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere. The Pythagoreans regarded the circle as sacred, and considered it as the symbol of the highest spiritual truth. It also represents very aptly all human progress, which is never in straight lines, but in circles returning on themselves as if advancing in ascending spirals or retrograding in vortexes tending downward.

*Horos as Har-pokrates was depicted as sitting on the cup of the lotos-blossom, with a finger on his mouth, contemplating the circle, and was the divinity here signified.

†*Porphyry*: *Cave of the Nymphs*: "The Egyptians represented the Sun and all the demons as not connected with anything solid or stable, but as elevated on a sailing vessel."

THE SUN THE SOURCE OF ENERGY.

Every department of the sky, every sign of the zodiac, every celestial course, every period of time according to which the world is put in motion, and all perfect things receive the forces which go forth from the Sun. Some of these forces are closely interblended with these, but others are superior to any commingling with them. Accordingly, the symbolic mode of expression also suggests them: "*Assuming a shape according to the Signs of the Zodiac and changing forms according to the Season.*" It likewise manifests his unchangeable, constant, unceasing and generally universal and abundant giving to the whole world.

The different receivers, however, are variously affected with regard to the indivisible boon of the divinity, and they receive from the Sun powers of many kinds according to their peculiar impulses. In this way the series of symbols coming in succession, is designed, through the multitude of gifts, to make manifest the One God [the Sun], and through the manifold powers exhibited, to cause his one power to appear. Hence, also, it sets forth that he is One and the Same, but that the changes of shape and the transformations are taken for granted among the recipients.*

On this account it is affirmed that the Sun changes "according to the sign of the zodiac and according to the season," because these manifestations are diversified with respect to the god, according to the many forms of his reception.

The Egyptian priests make use of such prayers to the Sun, not only at the Autopsias, but also in the more public prayers which have an interior sense, and are offered to the divinity with reference to such a symbolic initiation into the Mysteries.†

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*In this way, the Sun and Moon, though always of the same dimension, vary in apparent size and color, owing to accidents of the position of the earth, and the conditions of the spectator's eyesight.

†Porphyry in his letter to Anebo, interrogated him directly about these matters. "For this is said to be seen at the Autopsias," says he, "and they unwittingly attribute to that divinity a peculiar incident of

Hence it is not permitted that anyone shall offer any explanation.

"THE TERMS THAT ARE UNINTELLIGIBLE."

But the enquiries which follow, if we are to go through with them sufficiently in detail, require more information. Yet it is equally necessary in replying to bring out the truth in relation to them in few words. Thou demandest: "*Why are terms preferred that are unintelligible?*"*

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their own imagination. If, however, these expressions are uttered figuratively, and are symbolic representations of his forces, let them tell the interpretation of the symbols. For it is plain that if they denote the condition of the Sun, as in eclipses, they would be seen by every one who looked toward it intently."

The Autopsia was the final experience at the Initiatory Rite, when the candidate became an epoptes or Beholder. It was at once a view of one's own interior self and a vision of the Divinity. "Such a one," says Pindar, "knows the end of life and its sources from God." Paul the apostle is a little more explicit. "Such a man," says he, "was rapt into Paradise and heard ineffable things which it is not permitted a man to repeat." Hence Abammon declines to grant Porphyry's demand.

*The terms to which this reference is supposed to be made, are such as were enumerated by Alexander Trallianus: "Men, Thren, Mor, Phor, Teux, Za, Zôn, The, Lou, Khri, Gr, Ze, On." By these words, Trallianus declared, the sun becomes fixed in the heavens. He adds also others: "Iax, Azuph, Zuôn, Threux, Ban, Khôk." Very likely these as well as the famous Ephesian "spells," belong to an archaic language, which remained as a dialect of priests after having passed out of common use. The Latin language used in the Roman worship, the Hebrew in the Jewish, and the Sanskrit in the Brahman are analogous examples. Diodoros affirms that a barbarous or foreign dialect was used in the Samothrakian arcane rites. The expression, "*Konx om pax,*" at the Eleusinia has perplexed scholars for centuries. Mr. Robert Brown, Jr. however, has traced it to the Akkad origin, and shows it to be a profession of the Supreme Truth of existence.

There has always been a "language of priests:" the ancients called it "speech of the gods." Homer gives us names in that dialect as well as those given by "men." The monarchs of Egypt and Assyria took divine names in addition to their family designations, and the practice has been followed for many centuries by the Popes of Rome, when taking office, to adopt a saint's name for their official title.

The Mystic Rites were accompaniments of the Sacred language. They were observed in every ancient nation that had a literature, and seem to have been derived from the country of the Euphrates. It was esteemed sacrilegious to divulge them, and the holy name of a divinity was not permitted to be uttered outside the temple. See *Exodus* xx:7.

They are not "unintelligible," however, as thou hast thought. Nevertheless, let them be unknown to us, or let some of them be known, with reference to which we receive solutions from the gods; they, certainly, are all of them significant to the gods in a manner not divulged. Nor can they be significant and also oracular with human beings through imaginings, but either spiritually by the mind which is at once divine and human,* or in silence, or to express the conception in a better and simpler manner, by a mind united with the gods.†

We should, therefore, set aside all conceits and logical quibbles in regard to the divine names, and should, likewise, pay no attention to natural resemblances of speech which are closely akin to objects in the realm of nature. In the same manner, then, as the symbolic token of the divine likeness is spiritual and divine, the same thing is to be taken for granted in the names. Indeed, although we may not know it, this very thing is the most august in the case, for it is too grand to be classified for the purpose of being made known. In regard to those, however, of which we have received the skill to interpret the meaning, we possess in the name, the knowledge of the divine essence, power and order. Moreover, we guard carefully in the soul the mystic and ineffable image of the gods; and through them we lead the soul upward to the gods, and having exalted it as far as possible, we ally it with the gods.

But you ask, "Why of names that are significant, do we place foreign ones before those of our own language?"‡ The reason for this, also, is connected with the Mystic Rites. For the gods have made known that of the Sacred Nations, like

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*In other words, we comprehend first principles by simple intuition.

†This was called a visible manifestation of divinity. A philosopher remarks: "From the clearness of the mind and the refulgence of divine splendor, the presence of Divinity is perceived at once.

‡As Assyria is the chief Semitic country, the languages of Chaldæa and the Israelites are included under the designation. But whatever his dialect Abammon declares that Man is sacred everywhere. V, xxiv. There is a change of terms, however, in the question from those found in the Letter of Porphyry to Anebo, as will be seen by comparing.

the Egyptians and likewise the Assyrians, the entire dialect is suitable for sacred places. Hence, we believe that we ought to address our communications in speech native to the gods; and because such a mode of speaking is primitive and ancient, and most of all, as those who learned the first terms relating to the gods, mingled them with their own language and transmitted it to us, as being proper and suitable for these things, we have always preserved the law of tradition till the present time inviolate. For whatever else pertains to the gods, plainly the everlasting and unchangeable is kindred to them.

WHY FOREIGN SACRED TERMS MAY NOT BE TRANSLATED.

It is then objected: "*If the one who hears the voice gives attention to the signification, it is enough that the concept remains the same, whatever the term may be.*" The fact, however, is not as thou imaginest. For if terms had been fixed by conventional agreement, it would make no difference if some should be used instead of others. But if they are closely allied together in the nature of the things that have being,* those the more like it will be most assuredly the more agreeable to the gods. From this fact it appears agreeable to reason that the language of the sacred nations has been adopted in preference to that of the rest of mankind. For terms when they are translated do not always preserve their meaning the same as before; and besides, there are certain idioms with every nation that are impossible to express to another in intelligible speech. Accordingly, though, it may be possible to translate them; they no longer preserve the same force. "Foreign terms," likewise, have great emphasis and much conciseness, and contain less ambiguity, diversity and varied shades of meaning. For all these reasons they suit the Superior Races.

Away, then, with conjectures which deviate from the truth: such as this, whether "*the divinity that is invoked is Egyptian*

*Proklos considered that there were three classes of divine terms: the principal of which was for the gods themselves: the second was devised for the demons, and the third was employed by sagacious men in relation to matters of their own devising. The former of these were considered as possessing energy and power.

in race or makes use of the Egyptian language.'' Understand instead that the Egyptians were the first of mankind that were allotted to communion with the gods;* and the gods that are invoked delight in the Egyptian customs.

Suppose, then, ''these are all of them artful contrivances of jugglers,'' how is it possible that these things without which no sacred performance takes place successfully, which in the highest degree conjoin us with the gods, and combine us with them, and which possess powers almost equal to those of the superior races, should be only figments of the imagination? On the other hand, is it not true that *''these are disguises that have their origin in the passive conditions about us through being attributed to the divine agency?''* For it is not from what we have experienced, but on the contrary, from what are peculiar attributes of the gods, that we are aroused and address to them naturally the expressions proper for them. Nor do we form *''conceptions of the divine nature contrary to what it actually is.''* On the other hand, wherein it is natural, and as they who first established the laws of holy religious worship have come upon the truth respecting it, so we continue in them. For if anything of different customs of a religious character harmonizes with them, it is what does not change. And it is necessary with the ancient prayers as with the sacred places of asylum to preserve them inviolate and in the same manner, neither taking anything from them nor adding anything to them from any other source.† For this is perhaps the reason

*The extraordinary antiquity of the Egyptians and their modes of worship is everywhere recognized. They were an archaic people and were highly civilized when they first became known to other nations.

†Proklos speaks of these prayers as follows: "The purifying petition is the one which is offered for the purpose of averting diseases of the character of plague, and other contagions: we have such inscribed in the temples." Porphyry has preserved a petition somewhat like one in the *Gospel according to Luke.* "O Lord, the Sun and you other divinities, the dispensers of life to human beings, accept me and commend me to the immortal gods as your servant. So long as I have lived I have always worshipped the gods whom my parents taught me should be venerated."

After the adoption of the Bacchic rites from Asia into Greece, the prayers or hymns to the new divinity were as numerous and almost as

why at the present time everything is going to decay, and both the occult terms and the prayers have become without efficiency. They are constantly undergoing changes through the innovating disposition and the lawlessness of the Greeks, and nothing remains as it was. For the Greeks are by nature fond of innovation, and they are carried onward rushing eagerly in every direction. They have no ballast in them and they do not preserve what they received from anybody; but letting it quickly go, they remodel everything according to a never-ceasing fluency of words. But the foreign priests are steadfast in their customs, and continue firmly with the same words; for which reason, making use of the words grateful to them, they are themselves beloved by the gods. Nevertheless, to change them in any way is not lawful for any human being.

This much we have answered thee in regard to the words which are called both unutterable and barbarous* or foreign, and yet are becoming in holy rites.

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diverse as the States. The worshippers were principally women and the Eleans had a shout of which this is a translation:

"Come Lord Dionysos, Lord Most High,
Into thy holy shrine, the shrine ready for thee:
Frenzied, and with feet of ox,
Bull worthy of our praise, worthy Bull."

"*Hero,*" here rendered Lord, and Alioun, Most High, are archaic terms.

*The term *barbarous,* used in Greek for alien and foreign, seems to have been formed from the Egyptian term *Barbara,* the archaic designation of the Egyptian peasantry.

XVI

QUESTIONS PROPOSED

PART VIII

CHAPTER XVI

QUESTIONS PROPOSED

We will now pass over these matters, as thou sayest that thou desirest us "to declare plainly what the Egyptian Theosophers believe the First Cause to be: whether Mind or above Mind: and whether one alone or subsisting with another or with several others: whether unbodied or embodied, and whether the very same as the Creator of the Universe (Demiurgos) or prior to the Creator: also whether all things have their origin out from one or out from many: whether they likewise have knowledge respecting Primal Matter, or of what nature the first bodies were: and whether the Primal Matter was unoriginated or was generated."

First of all I will tell thee the reason why in the scrolls of the ancient Scribes of the Temple, many and various opinions are offered in regard to these things, and likewise why among those of the persons greatly skilled who are still living, the explanation is not given in simple terms. I say, then, that as there are many essences and these differing, the innumerably many principalities of these being in different orders, were handed down, different ones by different ancient priests.

Hence, as Seleukos* describes, Hermes set forth the universal principles in two thousand scrolls, or as Manetho affirms, he explained them completely in thirty-six thousand

*Seleukos is mentioned by Porphyry as a theologist and by Suidas as having written two hundred books in relation to the gods. By "scrolls" it is probable that only single discourses were meant, such as would now be given in a pamphlet.

five hundred and twenty-five treatises*. The different ancient writers, however, being in conflict with one another, have in many places given different interpretations in regard to the particular essence. It is necessary, however, to ascertain the truth in respect to them all, and then set it forth to thee concisely as we may be able.

First, then, give me thy attention in regard to this matter about which thou didst first ask.

GOD THE FIRST: GOD THE CREATOR.

Before the things that really are, even the first principles of all things, is One Divine Being, prior even to the first God and King, abiding immovable in the aloneness of his own absolute unity. For neither is Intelligence nor any principle else intermingled with him, but he is established an exemplar of the God self-begotten, self-produced and only-begotten, the One truly Good. For he is the something Absolutely Great and Supreme, the Source of all things, and root of the first ideals subsisting in the Supreme Mind. Then from this One, the God sufficient in himself caused himself to shine forth:† and hence he is self-engendered and self-sufficient. For he is the Beginning and God of Gods, a unity proceeding from the One, subsisting before essence, and the principle of essence. For from him are being and essence; and he is called accordingly Noëtarch, Chief of the realm of thought.‡

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*An Egyptian, Man-e-Thoth, or beloved Thoth. He was a priest at Sebennytus in the province of Sâis, in the reign of Plotemy Philadelphos, and compiled a history of ancient Egypt. This Number 36,525 is enigmatic, as it indicates by its analogy to the 365.25 days in a year.

†The Hindu *purana* gives a similar statement: "He whom mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who is of eternity,—even He, the Soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in personality. He willed to produce the various beings from his own divine substance."

‡"Under two Minds," says Damaskios, "the Life-imparting fountain of souls is comprehended." One, the Immovable First Cause, the Second, the Demiurgos or Creator.

These, then, are the oldest principles of all things. Hermes* places them before the gods of the Æther, the Empyrean† and the celestial regions.

MANY NAMES OF GOD—FORMATION OF MATTER.

According to another arrangement, however, Hermes places the God Emêph‡ as leader of the celestial divinities, and declares that he is Mind itself, perceptive of itself and converting the perceptions into his own substance. But he places as prior to this divinity, the One without specific parts, whom he affirms to be the first exemplar§ and whom he names

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*See PART I, CHAPTER II. Hermes the superlatively Great, was the titular author of numerous philosophic treatises, from the forty-two mentioned by Clement to the innumerable multitude mentioned by others.

†The Greek term ἐμπυριον (*empurion*), signifies "the region of fire." In the ancient cosmology, there was a fifth element, the æther, more pure and divine than the common atmosphere. It was an *akasha,* a pure fire and diviner matter: and of it the celestial bodies were composed. In the Babylonian and other theories there were three heavens, as here designated: the æther-heaven, the Empyrial or fire-region, and the supra-celestial above all. There were divinities of the second order peculiar to each.

‡Several have conjectured that this name should have been "Kneph" —Neph or Num, the "Good Demon." This was the name of the Creator in Nubia and also in Elephantina, and he was considered to be the same as Amun, the Supreme God at Thebes. The name *Neph,* almost identical with the Semitic term *"nephesh,"* or soul, reminds us that this god was considered as the "Soul of the World." It should also be remembered, however, that the name "Emeph" seems to be the same as Imoph, Motph or Imhetep, which signifies the "son of Phtha." In fact, this divinity was one of the triad of tutelaries of Memphis, which consisted of Phtha, his consort Pakht, or Bast, and their son Imhetep. Mariette-Bey considered him as the same as Thoth or Hermes, the god of learning. The Greeks, however, identified him with Asklepios and the Orientals with Esmun, of the Kabeirian Rites.

§Ficino substitutes the term παραδειγμα (*paradeigma*), or exemplar in the text, for μαγευμα (*mageuma*), or magic power.

Eikton.* In him are the First Mind and the First Intelligence, and he is worshiped by Silence alone.† Besides these, however, there are other leaders that preside over the creation of visible things.‡ For the Creative Mind, guardian of Truth and wisdom, coming to the realm of objective existence, and bringing the invisible power of occult words into light is called in the Egyptian language, Amon (the Arcane): but as completing everything in a genuine manner without deceit and with skill, *Phtha.* The Greeks, however, assume Phtha to be the same as Hephæstos, giving their attention to the Creative art alone.§ But as being a dispenser of benefits, he is called Osiris:|| and by reason of his other powers and energies, he has likewise other appellations.

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*This term is Greek, and its meaning is "the Likeness," and so the Ideal of the Universe.

†Damaskios relates that the Babylonians recognized the one First Cause, passing it over in silence. But it is probable that instead of Sigé or Silence, the divine intermediary, Siku, was the being actually named.

‡*Plato: Timæos,* XII, v, "The Deity himself formed the divine part in man, and delivered over to his celestial offspring the task of forming the mortal. These subordinate divinities, copying the example of their parent, and receiving from his hands the immortal principle of the human soul, fashioned subsequently to this the mortal body, which they consigned to the soul as a vehicle, and in which they placed another kind of soul, the seat of violent and fatal affections."

§The Semitic name P'T'H, Phtha, signifies the opener, the revealer, the Creator. Perhaps Semitic influence in Northern Egypt, which was of remote antiquity, accounts for the selection of the designation. When the early sovereignty of Egypt was at Memphis, Pth'ch was the chief divinity. After the expulsion of the Hyksos dynasty, the seat of power was transferred to Thebes in the South, and Amún or Amur-Ra (the Mystic Sun) was exalted to the supremacy. He was often figured like Kneph, with the head of a ram, indicating that the two were the same. Indeed, the Egyptian religion was actually at its core monotheistic. The various divinities were only aspects or personifications of different attributes.

||This name in the Egyptian dialect is variously spelled, as different readers supply the letters from the hieroglyphics. Plutarch states that the Egyptians pronounced it *Husiris,* and it is sometimes rendered Asar and Uasar. One Egyptian dogma makes it out Hes-iri, which would mean the Seat of Isis. It seems in its form to resemble Assur the God of Nineveh and Iswara, the Siva of India.

Accordingly there is also with the Egyptians another sovereignty of all the elementary principles in relation to the realm of generation, and of the forces in them. Four of them are reckoned as male and four as female. This sovereignty they assign to the Sun. There is also another empire of universal production around the dominion of objective existence, which they give to the Moon. Then marking off the sky into two parts, or four, or twelve, they place rulers over the parts in turn, more or fewer as the case may be, and over them all they set one who is the Overlord.* Thus the system of the Egyptian priests in relation to the First Principles, extending from above to the farthest extremes, begins from the One and passes on to the multitude: the many being guided and directed by the one, and the undefined realm of nature being placed under a defined measure of authority, even of the one Supreme Cause of all things. And the God produced Matter, rending materiality on the under side from essentiality; which being full of life,† the Creator took it and fashioned from it the simple and impassive spheres. But the last of it he organized into bodies that are subject to generation and dissolution.

SUMMARY OF TEACHINGS.

These subjects have now been thoroughly discussed, and in the books which thou mentionest as having met with by chance,

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*This, it will be noticed, relates directly to astrology and the casting of nativities, which was a constituent part of former sciences and religions, and is apparent in some of the modern customs.

†When we treat of matter," says Plutarch, "we need not conceive in our minds a body void of soul and of all quality and of itself wholly idle and inactive. We ought to conceive that this goddess (or divine entity) which always participates of the First God and is ever taken up with the love of those excellences and charms that are about him is not by nature opposite to him: that like a good-natured woman that is married to a man and constantly enjoys his embraces, yet hath a fond kind of longing after him, so hath she always a strong inclination to the God, though she be present and round about him, and though she be impregnated with his most prime and pure particles."

the solution of thy doubts is clear. For those which have been brought forward as the Books of Hermes contain Hermetic doctrines, although they are often set forth in the manner of speaking peculiar to the (Grecian) philosophers. For they were translated from the Egyptian language by men who were skilled in philosophy. But Chæremon* and others, if there are any, who have treated of the primary causes in relation to the world, also explain the last principles.† As many as hand down observations respecting the planets, the Zodiac, the decans, the horoscopes and the "Mighty Leaders,"‡ so called, make known the distribution of the rulers to their respective domains. The particulars that are mentioned in the calendars comprise a very small part of the Hermaic arrangement, and those in relation to the stars (or asterisms) or the phases, or occultations, or the increase or decrease of the Moon, are among the last things in the delineations of causes by the Egyptian sages.

The Egyptian priests do not "*explain everything as relating to natural objects.*" On the contrary they distinguish the life of the soul, and also the spiritual principle, from Nature itself, not only in respect to the universe, but also in respect

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*Chæremôn was the Scribe or literary man of a Temple. Suidas mentions him as belonging in Alexandria, and both Martial and Porphyry speak of him as a Stoic philosopher. He is quoted in Josephus, as giving the account of the Expulsion of the Lepers or alien people from Egypt, whom Manetho conjectured to have been the Israelites.

†The twelve months were divided by astrologers into thirty-six decans, and over each was a *decanus* or episcopus, whose office was to protect against calamity. The "horoscopos" was the caster of a nativity, one who forecasted a career from the conditions of the planets and zodiacal constellations at the time of birth.

‡The Twelve Gods who preside over the months of the year are thus designated. "While," says S. F. Dunlap, "the Babylonians offered sacrifices to the spirits of the dead, and the Twelve Gods presided over the months, and the thirty-six gods over the decani of the calendar; while Gods innumerable, portents, prophets, soothsayers and astrologers perplexed the people, the Chaldeans philosophized in their schools on the causes of things and the *modus operandi* of Nature and Creation."

to ourselves. Regarding it as firmly established that the Mind, and likewise the reasoning faculty, have being by themselves, they affirm that the things that are born are created. They likewise place the Creator as First Ancestor of those in the realm of generated existence,* and they acknowledge the life-imparting power prior to the heaven and subsisting in the heaven. They likewise set forth Pure Mind as above the world, and also the One without specific parts in the universal world, and another that is distributed among all the spheres.†

They do not by any means contemplate these things with the reasoning faculty alone, but they also teach that by means of the sacerdotal theurgy, the aspirant may mount up to the higher and more universal, and those conditions established superior to Fate, to God the Creator (Demiurgos): neither becoming attached to the realm of matter, nor taking hold of anything else besides only the observing of a proper time.‡

PRELUDE TO FURTHER EXPLANATIONS.

Hermes also points out the same path. Bitys, a prophet, explained it to King Amasis,§ having found it inscribed in

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*Chæremôn declared the Sun to be the Creator or Demiurgos. The vivific influences emanating from it, and the fact that the planetary world issued from it in the unknown periods of geologic antiquity, lend an air of plausibility to the hypothesis.

†It was taught by Anaximander that the earth was in the centre of a series of concentric spheres in which the sun, moon and stars were placed. The Pythagoreans held that the heavenly bodies were in these spheres revolving round a central fire.

‡In astrologic and other magic displays it is considered necessary to select carefully a proper time for consultation and ceremonies.

§Amasis or Aahmes II, was the successor of Apries or Pharaoh-Hophra, of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, whom he drove from power. He belonged at Sâis and bore the title of "Son of Neith." He obliged the priests of Egypt to admit Pythagoras and Solon to the temples to be instructed in the Egyptian learning. Bitys is conjectured to have been the priest Utaharpenses, who made public the names of the planets, which had been a sacerdotal secret, as was also the heliocentric theory.

hieroglyphics in the inmost shrine at Sâis in Egypt.* He also divulged the name of the god that extends through the whole world.†

There are also, however, many other arrangements in relation to the same things. Hence thou dost not seem to me to be right in saying that with the Egyptian priests all things are carried back to physical categories. For in their system, principles are many and concern many essences. There are likewise supermundane potentates whom also they worshiped by the Sacerdotal rite. To me, therefore, these things appear to furnish common starting-points for the solution of all remaining enquiries. But since we ought to leave none of them without examination, we will add them to these problems, and likewise hammer round them on all sides in order that we may see where thou conjecturest that there is anything unsound.

THE TWO SOULS OF MAN.

Thou also affirmest "that very many of the Egyptians *attribute to the motion of the stars whatever may happen to*

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*Sâis was the metropolis of a nome or principality in Northern Egypt, and a rival of Memphis in wealth and importance. Its prince, Tafnekht, famous for having cursed the memory of Menes, raised the standard of revolt against the Ethiopian Overlord, and his lineal descendant Psametikhos finally succeeded in delivering Egypt from the Assyrians and establishing the Twenty-sixth Dynasty with Sâis as his capital. Neitha was the chief divinity, and in her temple were recorded many of the maxims of Bokkoris the Wise. Here was the inscription so commonly referred to Isis,—doubtless the same goddess: "I am the All that was, that is and will be, and no mortal hath revealed me."

†The tutelary gods had secret names which it was regarded as sacrilege to divulge. (See *Exodus* xx, 7; *Judges* xiii, 18.) "The arcane names fill the whole world" was a theurgic maxim. Proklos also remarks: "There is a sacred name which, with sleepless, dart-like motion, runs through the worlds, through the swift menace of the Father." Whether the name which Bitys revealed was occult like the mystic designation of Yava in the Semitic nations, is worth enquiry. The designation, Amun, for example, only means arcane or concealed, implying that it was not regarded as the real name of the divinity.

us.'' But what the fact is must be explained to thee by many of the Hermaic concepts.*

For man, as these writings affirm, has two souls. The one is from the First Intelligence and is participant of the power of the Creator, but the other is given from the revolutions of the worlds of the sky, to which the God-beholding soul returns.†

These things being conditioned after this manner the soul that comes into us from the worlds follows (and is affected by) the periodic circuits of those worlds. But the soul that is in its higher mental quality from the world of Intelligence, is superior to the movement of the world of generated existence‡ and through this there takes place both the unbinding of fate, and the upward progress to the gods of the World of Mind. The theurgic discipline (or initiation), so far as it conducts upward to the Unbegotten, is made complete by a life of this kind.

LIBERATION FROM FATE.

That condition, therefore, about which thou utterest doubt, does not exist, namely: *''That all things are bound fast in the*

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*These were the propositions and theories put forth by various authors whose writings were indicated in the collection known as "Books of Hermes," or Tablets of Thoth.

†Plutarch says: "They who imagine the mind to be part of the soul err no less than they who make the soul a part of the body: for the mind is as far superior to the soul as the soul is better and diviner than the body. The combination of the soul with the mind makes the *logos* or reasoning faculty, and with the body, passion, of which the latter is the principle of pleasure and pain, and the former of virtue and vice. Of these three, the earth has given the body, the moon the Soul, and the Sun, the mind. Every one of us is neither courage, nor fear, nor desire, no more than flesh or fluids, but the part by which we think and perceive. The soul, being molded and formed by the mind and itself molding and forming the body, by encompassing it on every side, receives from it impression and form."

Plato in the *Timæos* likewise treats of the two souls or parts of the soul, the one mortal and the other immortal.

‡This phrase which translated literally would read "genesiurgic motion," relates to those matters of the world of sense, which are under control of fate and circumstance, and come within the province of chance and fortune.

indissoluble bonds of Necessity, which they term Fate." For the soul has a principle of its own leading around to the realm of Intelligence, and not only standing aloof from things of the world of generated existence, but also joining it to that which is,* even to the divine nature.

Nor do we "*connect Fate with the gods whom we worship in temples and with carved images, as being unbinders of Fate.* Yet the gods do "unbind Fate," but it is the last and lowest natures that descend from them and are in close alliance to the genesis of the world and to the body, that make Fate complete. With good reason, therefore, do we perform to the gods every holy rite in order that they may deliver us from the evils impending over us from destiny, as they alone, through the moral power of persuasion, have rule over necessity.

Nevertheless all things in the world of Nature are not controlled by Fate. On the contrary, there is another principle of the soul which is superior to the whole realm of nature and generated existence. By it we can be united to the gods, rise above the established order of the world, and likewise participate in the life eternal and in the energy of the gods of the highest heaven. Through this principle we are able to set ourselves free. For when the better qualities in us are in activity, and the soul is exalted to those beings superior to itself, then it becomes separate altogether from every thing which held it fast in the realm of generated existence, keeps itself aloof from inferior natures, exchanges one life for the other, and gives itself to a different order, entirely abandoning the former.

THE LIBERATION FURTHER EXPLAINED.

Why, then (it may be asked), is it not possible to liberate

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*This phrase, "that which is," is very significant. It transcends the concept of *existing* and denotes real being, eternity itself. This shows the true meaning of Pope's declaration: "Whatever IS is right." The Sanskrit term *Satya,* often rendered "truth," has exactly the sense of *Being,* that which is enduring and permanent, absolute fact. Hence the maxim: "There is no *dharma* or supreme law superior to that which is."

one's own self through the gods that revolve in the sky (the ruling planets), to consider them as Lords of Destiny, and also as binding our lives with bonds that are not to be dissolved?

Perhaps there is nothing to hinder this very thing. Although the gods possess numerous essences and powers in themselves, there are also inherent in them as many impracticable differences and contradictions. Nevertheless, it is lawful to affirm as much as this: that in every one of the gods, especially of those that are visible (in the sky), there are principles of essence which are of the world of Intelligence; and that through these, takes place the release for souls from generated existence in the world.

But although there were to be two classes of divine beings left, the gods that abide around the world, and those beyond, there will be liberty for souls through the gods above the world. These things are told more precisely in the "Treatise Concerning the Gods"*—as for example, who are the restorers, and what are their powers; and also how do they liberate from fate, and through what sacred paths upward; also of what quality is the arrangement of the mundane realm of nature, and how does the absolutely perfect moral energy rule over it?† Hence the passage which thou hast repeated from the Homeric poem—"even the gods themselves are yielding," it is a profanation to utter. For the performances at the Sacred Worship in ancient times were prescribed by laws that were both pure and spiritual. Those who are in inferior conditions are liberated by a superior order and power; and when we remove ourselves from conditions that are inferior

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*This work is lost. It was an explanation of the Pythagorean Symbology, and is quoted by Damaskios and Olympiodoros. Proklos restores some of the passages in his treatise upon the *Platonic Theology,* and also adopts the arguments. At the change of the Imperial Religion in the Fourth Century the books of the Philosophers were ordered to be destroyed on pain of death, and doubtless this work perished at that period.

†In the divine world, *nöesis* is *poiesis*—thinking is doing. What "God says" God is doing. All things are subject to mind, and to its behests. Mind, therefore, is the king of all things.

It was a theurgic saying, that by chants and sacrifices it was possible to revolutionize the realms of nature and generation.

we come into a better allotment. It is not effected, however contrary to any sacred ordinance that has existed from ancient times, in such a manner as to imply that the gods may be changed (in disposition or purpose) by sacred rites afterward performed. On the contrary, from their first descent till this present time God sent down the souls in order that they should return back again to him.* Never, therefore, does there a change occur by such a progress upward, nor do the descents of the souls, and their ascending occasion violent conflict. For as generated existence and every thing here are joined together at every point by the spiritual essence, so also in the arrangement of souls, the liberation from the conditions of generated existence accords with the diligence of those around the realm of generated existence.

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*There has been a great variety of opinion in regard to the descent of the soul. The book of *Ecclesiastes* has the sentence, "and the spirit to the God who gave it." Nobody has said that it had been sent into perpetual exile. The *Chaldean Oracle* declared "The Father placed symbols in the souls," by which their identification is assured. When the Creator sends out a soul, he also calls it to himself again. The circle of necessity will return upon the Infinite. Such is the teaching of all philosophy.

XVII

THE PERSONAL DEMON

PART IX

NATIVITIES AND GUARDIAN DEMONS

CHAPTER XVII

THE PERSONAL DEMON

Come, then, let us now endeavor, so far as we are able, to straighten the complicated problem in respect to the personal demon, which is likewise made the theme for various objections. So, therefore, to speak plainly, the treatment of the subject in respect to the personal demon is twofold, theurgic and technic: the one evoking him from the categories above, and the other from the visible periods in the world of generated existence. The former makes no use of the art of casting nativities, but the latter is devoted to such pursuits. The former pays honor to the demon more generally as superior to the province of nature, but the latter specifically as pertaining to the realm of nature altogether. Hence thou seemest to have brought down strangely the most perfect sacred performance to regard as a mere human affair, and to have put thy questions upon this subject as in a gymnastic exercise.

MODE OF QUESTIONING CRITICIZED.

So then, thou appearest to me to have cut off here only a very small part of the statement in relation to the personal demon. For it is the custom of those who work by the rules

of the art of vaticination in respect to the time of birth* to summon him in a prescribed form from the dekans and the risings of the constellations of the zodiac and likewise the stars; the sun also and the moon, and from the Bears† and likewise from all the elements,‡ and from the world. It is not fair for thee thus to parcel out one very small part of the subject, "the Lord of the House,"§ and put questions simply in regard to that.

Here, in turn, thou askest in relation to one single subject under consideration (the personal demon), *"how the Lord of the House assigns it: according to what purpose, or what quality of emanation, or life, or power, comes from it to us."* Thou also puttest the question in regard to "the calculating of nativities, whether it (the demon) actually exists, or not," and in regard to the finding of the Lord of the House, *"whether it is impossible or possible."* What importance have these questions about the domination, in relation to the demon? For it is evident that our knowing as to how he exists makes no difference in regard to such matters as his essence and cause. For in respect to things having an origin

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*Greek, *φύσις, phusis.* This term has a wide signification. It strictly means the passive or material principle, the originating power of the universe: but from that it has been used to denote the constitution of things, the peculiarity of sex, the bent of disposition, etc. Our author here employs the term as the female agency in production, contrasting it with the genesis. It thus signifies "birth" and has been rendered accordingly.

†It has been remarked as an argument against the genuineness of this sentence, if not of the entire book, that the Egyptian astrologists did not have the Great and Little Bear in their planisphere. Iamblichos, however, was a Syrian and conversant with Chaldean and Grecian learning. Herodotos names the Bear as a northern constellation. See I, 148: V, 10.

‡This term has a somewhat indefinite signification. It is supposed accordingly by some to denote in this connection the planets, and by others, the signs in the zodiac.

§Every sign of the zodiac was considered to have a "house" for its "lord," or ruling planet. In the *Gospel according to Matthew* a pun seems to be made on the term. "If they call the lord of the house Beel Zebul." This last name signifies "lord of the house."

in the realm of nature, even though we do not chance to know, it happens all the same, that all and each of them have their own stability of essence in the universe. Thus, therefore, we will meet thy difficulties generally; but we will direct our attention specifically to what thou askest and endeavor in respect to them to give thee the solutions.

FATE AND THE PERSONAL DEMON.

Thou also declarest that "*the person who has learned the scheme of his nativity, and so knowing his own demon, is liberated from fate, is truly favored by divinity.*" Thou dost not seem to me, however, to be saying these things altogether in harmony, either with themselves or with the truth. For if the demon has been assigned to us from the scheme of nativity, and we may find him from that, how are we released from fate through the knowledge that the demon was given to us according to fate? But if, as thou dost declare, we are really set free from necessity through the demon, how was it allotted to us by Fate?

Hence the things now uttered by thee not only conflict with themselves, but they are also at variance with the truth; seeing that the personal demon does not by any means come to every one by the scheme of his peculiar nativity. On the other hand, its origin, which we will hereafter set forth, was older than this. If, therefore, the demon that comes down should be contemplated alone from that source, the individual who attained a knowledge of the demon of his nativity, would by no means be happy or fortunate. Who, indeed, if in this case it were permitted to him, in order that he might accomplish the allotments from fate, would consent to receive the demon as a guide to liberation from fate? Yet this appears to me as a part of the theory respecting the demon, and to be the last of the kind, but that the whole of his essence is passed over in silence by such a mode of investigation. Yet these things, although they are incorrectly stated, are, nevertheless, not utterly foreign to the subject.

The doubts, however, which thou bringest out in their

order, in relation to "the enumeration of the Canons," and in relation to "skill in calculating nativities," that they are "beyond comprehension," do not involve us in any controversy in relation to the subjects before us. For whether these arts are knowable or beyond comprehension, yet the aura or emanation from the stars brings the demon to us, whether we ourselves are cognizant of it or not. The divine oracular art,* however, can teach us in relation to the stars as to that which is the truest, and, at any rate, we have no need of the enumeration of the canons, or of the art of divining.

ASTROLOGY EXPLAINED.

If, however, it is necessary, when dismissing these subjects, to say it, thou dost not seem to me right in what thou affirmest, namely: *That it is impossible for expertness in astral observations† to amount to any actual knowing, for there is great disagreement in relation to it, and because Chæremon or somebody else has spoken against it.*" Indeed, by this mode of argument reasoning will be beyond comprehension. For all the sciences‡ have tens of thousands of persons disputing, and the matters of doubt in them have been innumerable. Hence, therefore, we are accustomed to say in opposition to those who are fond of disputing, that contradictory things create dissension even in things that are actually true, and that falsities are not alone in fighting one another. So, also, in regard to the mathematical science [astrology], we may not only affirm that

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*Ficino renders this term "divine inspiration" in this place where it is contrasted with the art of casting nativities.

†Greek, *ματημματικὴ ἐπιστημή, mathematical episteme,* literally, skill in mathematics. But at the time when this work was written the term "mathematics" was employed to denote astrology, and accordingly it is so rendered.

‡Greek, *ἐπιστημαί, epistemai.* This term properly denotes knowledges of a superior character, which are comprehended by the noetic intelligence, instead of the dianoetic reasoning faculty. Hence it signifies what is above the common arts which are learned and classified, and so constitute what is in modern times designated "science" and "exact science."

it is true, but also that those who err in respect to it contradict, knowing nothing in respect to the things that are really true. This happens, however, not only in relation to this science, but also in relation to all the sciences which are delivered from the gods to human beings. For as time is always going on, they are often intermingled with much that is of mortal origin, and the divine character of the knowledge becomes greatly obliterated. It is truly within, however, and though scanty, this sure evidence of the truth is nevertheless effectual for its preservation. When the signs of the measurement of the revolutions of the divine ones are clearly evident before the eyes, when they indicate beforehand the eclipses of the sun and moon, the enterings of the sun into the signs of the zodiac, and departures out of them, and the concurrent risings and settings of the moon with those of the fixed stars, the proof of actual sight is manifested agreeing with the prediction. And what is more, the observations of the heavenly bodies which have been preserved through all the period, both by the Chaldeans* and by ourselves, bear witness together to the truth of this Science.

Demonstrations better known than these might be exhibited, if the discourse had been primarily upon these subjects. Nevertheless, as they are superfluous, and do not pertain to the recognition of the demon, it is proper that I leave them out, and pass on to matters more appropriate than these.

THE PERSONAL DEMON NOT DISCOVERED BY ASTROLOGY.

In thy epistle thou makest this statement: "The assumption of the Lord of the House (or Lords of the House, if there are more than one) pertaining to a nativity, is almost confessed by astrologers themselves to be beyond absolute prov-

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*The Æon, or period, was reckoned as three hundred thousand years. Proklos, in his Commentary on the *Timæos,* states that the Chaldeans had records of observations of the stars which embraced entire cosmic cycles of time. Cicero, in his *treatise on Divination,* declares that they had records of the stars for the space of 370,000 years; and Diodoros the Sicilian asserts that their observation comprehended 470,000 years. As great antiquity was also claimed for the Egyptians. Kallisthenes when in Babylon sent the computations of the Chaldeans to his uncle Aristotle.

ing; and yet it is from this assumption, they say, that the ascertaining of one's own personal demon is possible.'' How is the knowing of the Lord of the House to be acknowledged by them to be beyond comprehending, when they deliver clear methods in relation to its discovery, and likewise teach thoroughly the elementary principles for the determining of the disputed matters; some five, others more, and others fewer?* However, in order that we may get beyond this, let us proceed to examine a matter of more importance, the contingent attributes of both sides of the question. For, if it is possible to discover the Lord of the House pertaining to the nativity, the demon that has been assigned from it is also knowable; and if the matter is out of reach, then, according to this hypothesis, we do not know him. Nevertheless, as there is a Lord of the House, there is also a demon that has been assigned from him. What hinders, then, that while it may indeed be difficult to discover him through the calculating of the nativity, it may be easy to perceive him by means of sacred divination or theurgy?

In short, the demon is not assigned by the Lord of the House only, but, on the other hand, there are many origins for him more universal than by the Lord of the House.† Still, however, such a method introduces an artificial and human procedure in regard to the personal demon. Hence in these difficulties which thou hast suggested there is nothing wholesome.

TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE GUARDIAN DEMON.

If, however, it is necessary to reveal to thee the true doctrine in relation to the personal demon let me say this: It is not from one part in the sky, nor from any individual element

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*"We say," says Hephæstion of Alexandria, "that a star which has five conditions anywhere in sight is a Lord of the House: in other words, if that star received the luminaries in their own boundaries, their own altitude, and their own triangle." He adds this condition: "if besides it has contiguity, emanation and configuration."

†According to the Egyptian notion, every person received his guardian demon at the hour of birth, and they looked no further. They regarded only the horoscope.

of the objects that are visible,* that he is assigned to us. But there is from the whole world and the various kinds of life in it, and the various kinds of body by which the soul comes down into the realm of generated existence, an allotted portion, all our own, divided among us to each of the distinctive qualities in us, which distribution is made according to the ruling disposition of each individual.

This demon, therefore, is present as exemplar† before the souls descend into the realm of generated existence. As soon as the soul chooses him for leader‡ the demon immediately comes into charge of the completing of its vital endowments, and when it descends into the body, unites it with the body, and becomes the guardian of its common living principle. He likewise himself directs the private life of the soul, and whatever the conclusions we may arrive at by inference and reasoning, he himself imparts to us the principles. We think and do just such things as he brings to us by way of thought. He guides human beings thus continually till through the sacred theurgic discipline we shall obtain a god to be guardian and leader of the soul. For then he gives place to the superior, or delivers over the superintendence, or becomes subject, as a tributary, to him, or in some other way is servant to him as to an Overlord.§

ONE GUARDIAN DEMON ONLY TO AN INDIVIDUAL.

From these facts I may easily reply to your next question. For the personal demon does not "*preside over specific regions in us,*" but simply over all at once. He pervades every

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*Greek, *στοιχείαον, stoicheion.* In later centuries of the Roman Empire, this term was used to signify planets and signs of the zodiac.

†In other words the ideal or divine model after which the soul takes earthly form.

‡Plato: *Republic,* X. Plato has outlined no distinction beyond choosing a mode of living, but here it is affirmed that the soul chooses a demon of a superior order by its own intelligent volition.

§One writer remarks: "A demon is placed with every human being to be his initiator into the mysteries of life."

principle about us, in the same manner as it was assigned from all the orders [of intelligence] in the universe. For it also seems proper to thee to remark as follows: "That there are demons placed over specific departments of the body, one over health, one over the figure, and another over the bodily habits, forming a bond of union among them, and that one is placed as superior over all of them in common." This very thing thou shouldst consider as proof that the authority over everything in us is vested in one demon alone. Accordingly it is not right to define "*one demon as guardian of the body, another of the soul, and another of the mind.*" For if the living person is one individual and the demon manifold that is placed over him, the notion is absurd. Certainly the ruling powers everywhere are single rather than those that are ruled. But it is still more absurd if the many demons ruling over special departments are not akin, but are to be classified apart from one another.

Thou also declarest that there are contradictory characters among them, saying that "some demons are good and others bad." Evil demons have no allotment whatever as guardians, and they are never classified in opposition to the good, like one party against another, as though having equal importance.

THE GUARDIAN DEMON NOT A "PART OF THE SOUL."

Having in succession abandoned these points, thou goest quickly over to the conjecture of the (Grecian) philosophy; yet in relation to the personal demon thou overturnest the entire hypothesis. For if the demon is "a part of the soul," as, for instance, the spiritual or intellectible,* and "he who has a mind imbued with good sense is the truly favored one," there will be no other order of beings, divine or demonian, assuming authority over the human soul as being superior to it. Instead, there will be special parts of the soul, or some

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*Mænander says: "The mind is our demon." The term was used with a variety of meanings at different times.

power existing separately supreme over the many forms of the life within us; and these, not as allied by nature, but as having been set apart as superior in their nature to our entire substance.

SEVERAL GUARDIAN DEMONS.

After this thou callest to mind another statement in relation to the personal demon, namely: that "*some persons perform worship as to two, and others as to three of this class.*" This, however, is all erroneous. For the classifying of the superior causes that are placed over us instead of including them in one, is a fallacious way of proceeding, and it goes completely astray from the unity which holds dominion in everything. The doctrine which apportions the demon into parts in the body, or in the governing of the body, drags down its leadership to a very small point. What necessity, in such case, for those who entertain such an opinion, to regard sacred rites, the first principle of them being unsound?

There is, accordingly, one personal guardian demon for every one of us. It is not right to assume that it is common to everybody, or that it is common at all, but only that it is present with every individual as his own. For a distribution to every species, and the diversity existing in the realm of matter, do not admit of the union and identity of things essentially incorporeal.

Why is it, then, that the demon "is invoked by all with a common form of invocation"? It is because their invocation is made through one divinity, the Lord of the demons who from the beginning assigned to every one his personal demon.* Even now also at the sacred rites he makes known to all and each their personal demons, according to his own purpose. For always in the theurgic arrangement, the secondary are invoked through the superior divinities. In respect to the de-

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*This seems to be at variance with Plato, who says: "The demon will not receive you as his allotment, but you shall choose the demon: the cause is in him who makes the choice, and the Deity is blameless."

mons, therefore, one common leader of the cosmocrators,* in respect to the nativity, sends down to each and all, his personal demon. Hence when the personal demon is present he makes known his own proper worship and teaches the proper mode by which he is to be invoked.

ABOUT THE INVOKING OF GUARDIAN DEMONS.

This arrangement is also acceptable to the demons. One part of it is akin to the demons that are invoked: another comes down from the more ancient categories: and the third makes a joint action from both the others. Do not, therefore, liken the invocations of gods with those to men, nor things not to be uttered with those that may be told; and do not compare the things that are prior to every limitation and every undefined mode, to those that have been defined by men or with indefinite arrangements. For these things that belong with us have nothing in common with those who are wholly superior to us in their entire race and order and rule the whole of our essence and nature.

Nevertheless, right here especially, the greatest failures occur to men when from human weakness, they infer anything in relation to the guardianship of the demons: and when with things that are trivial, worthy of nothing, and in parts, they form a judgment of beings that are great, noteworthy and perfect.

This much we answer you in respect to the personal demon in addition to what was said before.

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*Rulers of the cosmic world: the demons allotted to the several regions of the universe. The term occurs in the *Pauline Epistle to the Ephesians,* vi, 12.

XVIII

ENDÆMONIA, OR THE TRUE SUCCESS

PART X

THE FIRST CAUSE

CHAPTER XVIII

ENDÆMONIA, OR THE TRUE SUCCESS

The last subject remaining for discussion is in relation to true success.* Thou hast put intricate problems with regard to it, namely: first, observations upon certain subjects: next, matters of doubt: and after these, questioning. We will accordingly place thy questions in their order, each and every one of them, and will answer these in due course in reference to them.

Thou askest "whether there is not some other path to true success apart from the gods."† What different way upward can there be, "entirely apart from the gods" that is reasonable? For if the essence and perfection of every good are comprised in the gods, and their primary power and authority are with us (priests),‡ and with those who are in like manner possessed by the superior divinities, and have come genuinely into union with them—and in short, if the source and end of goodness are earnestly pursued: in such case, there are present accordingly, the Spectacle of Truth and the initiation into spirit-

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*Greek, *ενδαιμονία, endaimonia.* This term was employed by Plato and Aristotle to denote true and complete happiness. Its derivation from *en,* or well, and *daimôn,* a divinity, a good genius, good fortune, indicates its true signification, as the condition favored by the good genius; hence, it denotes felicity, good fortune, prosperity, success—as being in favor with God and man.

†Porphyry here refers to the gods that were invoked in the theurgic rites.

‡The Oracle had, before the time of Porphyry, assigned to the Egyptian priests the finding of the path to felicity. Hence Herodotos declared them the first to institute the Sacred Rites.

ual knowledge. And with the knowing of the gods, the turning around to our own selves and the knowing of ourselves follow together.

VARIOUS STATEMENTS CRITICISED.

To no purpose, therefore, thou proposest the doubt "whether it is necessary to pay any regard to human opinions." For what leisure has the person whose mind and thought are with the gods to look down for approval from human beings? Nor in what follows dost thou speak to the purpose: "whether the Soul does not now and then form grand conceptions." For what principle of fanciful creations has a place in those who have real being? Is not the faculty of imagination in us the former of *eidola?* But when the spiritual life is perfectly active, there is nothing of the imagination awakened. Does not the truth in its essence coëxist with the gods? At least, is it not established with rational principles harmoniously? It is in vain, then, that thou and others whisper such things.

Nevertheless, these things about which certain mountebank priests and fortune-tellers calumniate those who minister at the worship of the gods, and thou hast spoken in the same way—are none of them at all connected with genuine theology and theurgy. Yet if, in some way, certain things of such a character shoot out as excrescences beside the knowledges of the things that are good, as evil arts sprout up with other arts, these very knowledges are actually more opposed by them than anything else. For that which is evil is more hostile to the good than to that which is not good.

CONCERNING NATURAL PRESENTIMENT.

I desire after this to go curiously over other remarks which misrepresent the divine foreknowledge. Thou comparest with it "other methods for obtaining premonitions of what will take place." For to me, although a certain aptitude of nature aids in the signifying of what is to occur, just as the foreknowing

of earthquakes, or of winds, or of storms happens to animals, it does not seem worthy of our veneration. For such an inborn faculty of divining accompanies acuteness of sense—or sympathy, or some other commotion of the natural faculties, and has nothing about it worshipful and supernatural. Nor if any one by human reasoning or systematic observation determines from symptoms those things of which the signs are indicative, as physicians from the systolê of the pulse prognosticate a coming fever, he by no means appears to me to possess anything honorable and good. For he likewise sets himself to it humanly, and infers logically by our reasoning faculty in relation to things which confessedly occur in the order of nature and he makes his diagnosis not very far away from the corporeal order of things. Accordingly, if there is in us any natural perception of the future, the faculty is clearly shown in activity as in everything else, but in having this nothing that is very happy is possessed. For what can there be of the qualities implanted in us by nature in the realm of generated existence that is a genuine, perfect and everlasting benefit?

THE DIVINE ENDOWMENT.

The divine endowment of divination* alone, therefore, being conjoined with the gods, imparts to us the divine life and likewise making us participants of the divine foreknowledge and the divine thoughts, renders us truly divine. It causes us to be genuinely the possessors of goodness, because the most blessed thought of the gods abounds with every good. Hence, "*they who possess the endowment of divining,*" do not, as you surmise, "foresee and are not really successful," for all divine foreknowledge is seemingly good. Nor do they "foresee future events, and not know how to make use of the foresight properly for themselves." On the contrary, with

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*Greek, *μαντικη, mantike,* the art of divining; prophecy, inspiration. This is the term which has been generally translated as divination. But divination as described by Grecian writers was the same as prophecy, and implied intimate communion with divinity.

the foreknowledge, they receive beauty itself and order that are at once true and becoming, and there is with it that which is profitable. For the gods give them also the power of protecting themselves against direful calamities from the realm of nature: and when it is necessary to exercise courage and the uncertainty of the future contributes to this, they keep the things hidden that are to be, in order to make the soul better. Yet when uncertainty does not bring any help for this purpose, and the foreknowledge is advantageous to souls, for the sake of saving them and leading them upward, then the gods implant in their inmost beings the foreknowledge inherent in the inspired communications.

THE PATH TO TRUE SUCCESS.

But why am I prolonging these discourses? I have abundantly shown before by the many explanations which I have made in them, the superiority of the inspiration over human divination. Better, therefore, is what you ask from us: "To make plain to you the path to success, and in what the essence of it consists." For from this the truth is then to be found, and all the difficulties may thus be at once easily resolved. I say, therefore, that the divine person gifted with intuition, having, in a former condition of being, been participant of the oneness, by the spectacle of the gods, comes at a later period to another soul (or psychic condition) which is adjusted to the human ideal of figure, and through this becomes involved in the bond of Necessity and Fate.* Now then

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*This is a similar account of that given by Plato in the *Phædros*. The souls while in the eternal region are described as beholding the *thea* or vision of the gods, and accompanying them in their journey in their planetary orbits in the sky, having been initiated and become *epoptai* or Beholders of the Mysteries of that world. This, the philosopher explains, was "while we possessed our nature in its entirety and did not suffer the molestations of evil which were awaiting us in the future time, when we were free and not invested with the body to which we are bound as an oyster to the shell." After this came the "descent into the realm of generated existence," and investiture with the "mortal soul" and its conditions. See *Timæos* and Plutarch's treatise on *The Face in the Orb of the Moon*, 28.

it is necessary to consider how he may be unloosed and set free from his bonds. There is no other way except the knowing of the gods. For the ideal of success is the apperceiving of the Good, just as the ideal of badness happens to be forgetting of what is good and deceit in relation to what is bad. The former, therefore, joins with the Divine nature: but the latter, an inferior destiny, is inseparable from the mortal.* The former seeks the intellectible essences by the sacred paths:† but the latter, having swerved from the first principles, yields itself to the measuring out of the ideals of the corporeal environment. The former is the knowing of the Father:‡ but the latter is the going aside from him and a forgetting of God, the Father, first in Essence and sufficient for himself. The former preserves the genuine life and brings it back to its Father, but the latter brings the man ruling in the realm of generated existence down to the world which is never permanent but always changing.§

Let, then, this superior path to true success, which is the spiritual completing of the union of souls to the divine nature, be cognized by thee. But the sacerdotal and theurgic gift of

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*Plato: *Theætetos* 84, *Sokrates.* "It is not possible that evil should be destroyed; for it is necessary that there should be always something contrary to good; nor can it be seated among the gods, but of necessity moves around this mortal nature and this region. Wherefore we ought to fly hence as quickly as possible; and this flight consists in being assimilated to God as much as possible, and this assimilating is the becoming just and holy with wisdom."

†By the Sacred or hieratic paths, Abammon evidently means the theurgic discipline. The ancient Oriental faiths all made the service of the *guru,* or spiritual teacher, an essential in the matter of knowing the truth.

‡Compare *Gospel according to John,* xvii, 3: "This is the eternal life (the life of the eternal world), namely: that they know thee the God only true."

§The philosopher Herakleitos held that "change" is the "only persisting" condition of things. He taught that the Supreme Being is fire—not mere physical heat, but an ætherial principle; and that it acted on matter producing motion and creative activity.

true success is called the Door* to the Creator of the Universe, or Supreme Goodness. In the first place it possesses the power of chastity of soul which is far more perfect than chastity of the body: afterward, the preparing of the understanding for the participation and vision† of the Good and its release from everything of a contrary character: and after these, oneness with the gods the givers of all things good.

RETURN OF THE SOUL TO DIVINITY.

After the theurgic discipline has conjoined the soul individually with the several departments of the universe, and with all the divine powers that pervade it, then it leads the soul to the Creator of the world, places it in his charge, and frees it of everything pertaining to the realm of matter, uniting it with the Sole Eternal Reason (Logos).

What I am saying is this: That it unites the soul individually to the One, Father of himself, self-moving. He who sustains the universe, spiritual, who arranges all things in order, who leads it to the supreme truth, to the absolute, the efficient, and other creative powers of God: thus establishing the theurgic soul in the energies, the conceptions and creative qualities of those powers. Then it inserts the soul in the entire Demurgic God.

This, with the Egyptian Sages, is the end of the "Return" as taught in the Sacred Records.

CONCERNING "THE GOOD."

The Good itself, they consider on the one side as absolute Divinity, the God subsisting before thought: but on the other

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*In the former years of the nineteenth century there arose a teacher in Persia, who was designated the "Bab"—gate or door. He promulgated a mystic doctrine somewhat in analogy to that of the Sufis, with many features of the later Platonism and Gnostiasm and Parsism. He was afterward executed, but his disciples still constitute a numerous body.

†Greek *θεά, thea,* a vision, contemplation. The term is used to signify the Spectacle exhibited at Initiatory Rites.

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as human, who is a unity with him. Bitys has explained this from the Hermaic Scrolls. This, therefore, is not *"passed over"* by the Egyptian priests, as thou dost suggest, but is handed down by them in a style worthy of the divine being. Nor do the Theurgists *"call upon the Divine Mind"* in relation to *"trivial matters,"* but on the other hand it is in regard to matters appertaining to the purifying of the soul, its release and salvation. Nor do they *"employ themselves diligently with things that are difficult: but of no use to human beings"*; but on the contrary, such as are the most profitable of all to the soul. Nor are they imposed upon by a *"vagabond"* demon, who have in every instance not only contended successfully with the deceitful demonian nature, but have exalted themselves to the realm of mind and divinity.

VALEDICTORY.

These many things we have answered thee as we best were able in relation to the doubts and difficulties which thou hast discovered in relation to the divine art of divination and theurgy. It now remains with the end of these discourses that I pray the gods to bestow upon me and thee, the unchanging safeguard of true conceptions: and likewise to implant in us forever the everlasting truth, and to provide for us a participation of more perfect conceptions in relation to the divine beings: for in these the most blessed consummation of all things good is set before us, and the confirmation of the hearty friendship which now exists between us.

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